

THE CATHOLIC FAITH
A COMPENDIUM AUTHORIZED
BY H. H. POPE PIUS X



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THE CATHOLIC FAITH

A COMPENDIUM AUTHORIZED

BY H.H. POPE PIUS X

R.C. Church

TRANSLATED BY PERMISSION

OF THE HOLY SEE

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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

THIS translation has been made by special permission of the Holy See in positive form from the *Catechismo Maggiore*, to meet the wishes of Catholics and others who desire to possess a brief and authoritative summary of what is taught about the Faith by the Catholic Church.

As the Catechism above referred to is prescribed by the Holy Father for use in all the higher classes of schools in the province of Rome, with the expression of a confident hope that it will be taken as a model for wider use, it is clear that the doctrine therein contained is published with the highest authority any Compendium of Catholic teaching can possess.

The positive form has been adopted because many adults prefer this to a catechetical form of instruction, and also because the whole of the *Catechismo Maggiore* has already been translated in its original catechetical form into English.

The translator trusts that this little book may be of use not only to Catholics, whether by birth or by conversion, but also to our "separated brethren" who wish to know what a Catholic is called upon to believe and to practise. Anyone who professes to follow the teaching of Jesus Christ should be interested to peruse this handy manual, which, in the words of the Supreme Head of the greatest and oldest of associations of Christians, contains a "*clear exposition of the rudiments of the Holy Faith, and of those divine truths which should guide and shape the life of every Christian.*"

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The Catholic Faith

INTRODUCTORY

WE are Christians by the grace of God ; for to be a Christian is an entirely gratuitous gift of God, a gift which we could do nothing to deserve. He is a true Christian who is baptized, and who believes and professes the doctrine of Christ, and obeys the lawful Pastors of the Church.

Christian doctrine is the doctrine taught by Christ to show us the way of salvation, and therefore, it is certainly necessary that we should learn the doctrine of Christ, and it would be a grave omission to neglect to do so. Parents and guardians are bound to see that their children and dependents acquire a knowledge of Christian doctrine, and they incur guilt in the sight of God if they neglect this duty.

It is from the Holy Catholic Church that we must receive and learn Christian doctrine, for we are certain that her teaching is true, because Jesus Christ, who is the divine Author of this teaching, entrusted it through the Apostles to the Church which He founded and constituted to be the infallible teacher of all men, promising her His divine assistance till the end of the ages. The

truth of Christian doctrine is further proved by the conspicuous saintliness of many who professed it in the past or who profess it to-day, by the heroic courage of the martyrs, by its rapid and wonderful propagation in the world, and by its preservation in its integrity throughout so many centuries of unceasing strife.

There are four principal parts of Christian doctrine; 1. the *Credo*, or Creed; 2. the *Pater noster*, or Our Father; 3. the Commandments; 4. the Sacraments.

The Creed teaches the principal articles of our holy faith; the Our Father, everything that we ought to hope for from God, and all that we ought to ask Him to give us; the Commandments, all that we ought to do to please God, which is all comprised in loving God above everything and our neighbour as ourselves for God's sake. The doctrine of the Sacraments teaches the nature and right use of the means appointed by Christ for the forgiveness of sins, for the communication of His grace, and for the infusion and increase in us of the virtues of faith, hope, and charity.

PART I

I.—The Apostles' Creed or "Credo"

THE Apostles' Creed is so called because it is a summary of the truths of the faith taught by the Apostles. It consists of twelve articles, and is divided as follows :

1. I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth :
2. and in Jesus Christ His only Son, our Lord :
3. who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary :
4. suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried :
5. He descended into hell, the third day He rose again from the dead :
6. He ascended into heaven ; sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty :
7. from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.
8. I believe in the Holy Ghost :
9. The Holy Catholic Church ; the Communion of Saints :
10. the forgiveness of sins :
11. the resurrection of the body :
12. and life everlasting. Amen.

The word *Credo* means : " I hold for most true everything contained in these twelve articles ; and I believe these things more firmly than if I saw them with my eyes, because God, who cannot be

deceived or deceive, has revealed them to the Holy Catholic Church, and through her has also revealed them to me." The Creed contains all that is most important for us to believe about God and Jesus Christ, and His spouse, the Church.

II.—The First Article of the Creed

*"I believe in God the Father Almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth"*

OF GOD THE FATHER AND CREATION

THE first article of the Creed teaches that there is only one God, and that He created heaven and earth and everything contained in heaven and earth, *i.e.*, the whole universe. Reason proves and faith confirms the existence of God.

He is called the Father, 1. because He is the Father, by nature, of the second Person of the Blessed Trinity, *i.e.*, of the Son begotten by Him ; 2. because He is the Father of all men whom He has created, preserves and rules ; 3. because He is the Father, by grace, of all good Christians, who are, therefore, called the sons of God by adoption.

The Father is called the first Person of the Blessed Trinity, because He does not proceed from the other Persons, but is the source of the other two, *i.e.*, of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

By saying that He is almighty, we mean that He can do everything except sin or die, because sinning and dying are the effects not of might but of weakness, which cannot exist in God, who is absolutely perfect.

He is called Creator, because to create is to make out of nothing, and He made heaven and earth and the whole universe out of nothing. But

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we must not think of the creation of the world as the operation of the Father alone, because whatever one Person does with regard to creatures is also done, in one and the selfsame act, by the other Persons of the Blessed Trinity. The work of creation is specially attributed to the Father, because it is the effect of divine omnipotence which is specially attributed to the Father, as is wisdom to the Son, and benignity to the Holy Ghost, although all three Persons have the same omnipotence, wisdom and benignity.

God has not only created the world and all things therein, but He preserves and governs them with infinite wisdom and benignity, and nothing can happen, unless He wills or permits it. We say "permits" as an alternative to "wills," because there are some things which He wills and orders, and others which He permits or does not prevent, such as sin ; and if He does not prevent sin, it is because even out of this abuse of man's liberty He can so bring forth good as to make His mercy and justice ever more and more manifest.

OF THE ANGELS

Of all the beings created by God, the noblest are the angels, who are pure spirits endued with intelligence, made to honour and serve Him, and to enjoy eternal felicity. They have no form or sensible appearance, since God intended them to exist without being united to any bodily shape. Nevertheless, they are represented under sensible forms: 1. to help our imagination ; 2. because they have often appeared to men thus, as is recorded in Holy Scripture.

Not all the angels were true to God, but some,

through pride, claimed to be His equals, and to be independent of Him, and for this sin they were forever excluded from paradise and condemned to hell. The angels thus excluded from paradise are called demons, and their chief is named Lucifer or Satan. They are able, if God permits them, to do us much harm both in body and soul, and this, chiefly, by tempting us to sin. They tempt us, because they are led by envy to desire our eternal perdition, and because they hate God, whose glorious image they see reflected in us ; and God allows these temptations that we may overcome them by His grace, and acquire habits of virtue and merits for paradise. Temptations are conquered by means of watchfulness and prayer and Christian mortification.

Those who remained true to God are called good angels, heavenly spirits, or simply angels ; and they were confirmed in grace and ever enjoy the vision of God, whom they love, bless and praise everlastingly. Furthermore, God employs them as His ministers, and entrusts to many of them the special office of acting as our guardians and protectors. For this reason, we owe a special debt of devotion to our guardian angel, whom we should honour and invoke to help us, following his inspirations and showing gratitude for the constant assistance which he affords us.

OF MAN

The noblest of God's creatures on the face of the earth is man, a being endued with reason, and consisting of soul and body. The soul is the highest part of man, because its nature is spiritual, and it is endowed with intelligence and will, and is capable of knowing God and of possessing Him

eternally. The soul cannot be seen or handled, because it is a spirit, and therefore it cannot die; and this is proved both by faith and reason.

Man is free in his actions, and everyone feels that he has it in himself to do a thing, or not to do it, or to do one thing rather than another. For instance, I am free to tell a lie or not to tell it, for I could have spoken or held my peace, or I might even have spoken otherwise, telling the truth.

We say that man was made in the image and likeness of God, because man's soul is spiritual and rational, free in its actions, and able to know and love God and to enjoy Him eternally, perfections which reflect in us a ray of the infinite excellences of our Lord.

God set our first parents, Adam and Eve, in a state of innocence and grace, but they soon fell from it by sin. In addition to innocence and sanctifying grace, God granted them other gifts, which they ought to have handed down to their descendants together with sanctifying grace. He gave them *integrity*, which is the complete subjection of the senses to the reason; *immortality*; *immunity* from all sorrow and pain; and *knowledge* proportioned to their condition.

Adam's sin was a sin of pride and disobedience. By sinning, he and Eve lost the grace of God and their right to heaven, and were driven from the garden of Eden, and subjected to numerous ills of soul and body, and condemned to die. Had they not sinned but continued true to God, after a happy and peaceful stay on earth they would have been translated by God, without dying, to heaven, there to enjoy an eternal and glorious life. These gifts

were not in any way due to man, but were absolutely gratuitous and supernatural ; and, therefore, when Adam disobeyed the divine command, God could deprive him and all his posterity of them without injustice.

Nor was Adam's sin solely his own, but it was ours too, though in a different way. It was Adam's own sin, because he committed it by an act of his own will, and, therefore, it was properly and personally his. It is ours, too, because, owing to Adam having sinned as the head and fount of the whole human race, it was transmitted by natural generation to all his descendants, and, therefore, to us it is original sin. Original sin, moreover, is transmitted to all men, because God granted to the human race in Adam sanctifying grace and other supernatural gifts, on condition that Adam was not disobedient ; but when, in his character of head and father of the human race, he disobeyed, he made human nature rebellious against God. And, therefore, human nature was transmitted to all the descendants of Adam in a state of rebellion against God, and deprived of divine grace and the other gifts. Furthermore, all men incur original sin except the Blessed Virgin, who was preserved from it by a singular privilege through prevision of the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Since Adam sinned, men have only been able to be saved through the mercy of God, and His mercy was shown in the promise made directly to Adam of a divine Redeemer or Messiah, who would be sent in due time to set men free from the dominion of the devil and from sin. This promised Messiah is Jesus Christ, as we are taught in the second article of the Creed.

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III.—The Second Article of the Creed

“and in Jesus Christ His only Son, our Lord”

THE second article of the Creed teaches us that the Son of God is the second Person of the Blessed Trinity, and that He is God, eternal, omnipotent, Creator and Lord, like the Father, and that the Son of God made man is called Jesus Christ.

The second Person is called the *Son*, because He is begotten of the Father by way of the mind from all eternity, and on this account He is also called the eternal Word of the Father. He is called the *only Son of God the Father*, because He alone is Son by nature, and we are sons by creation and adoption.

He is called *our Lord*, because, together with the Father and the Holy Ghost, He has created us as God, and, as God and man, He has further redeemed us.

He bears the name of *Jesus*, which means Saviour, because He has saved us from the eternal death deserved by our sins. The Father Himself gave Him the name of Jesus through the archangel Gabriel, when the latter was sent to announce the mystery of the Incarnation to the Virgin.

The Son of God was called also *Christ*, which means anointed and consecrated, because formerly kings, and priests, and prophets were anointed; and Jesus is King of kings, and High Priest, and greatest of Prophets. The unction of Jesus Christ was not bodily like that of the kings, priests and prophets of old, but wholly spiritual

and divine, because the fulness of the divinity dwelt in Him essentially.

Even before His coming, men knew of Jesus Christ through the promise of the Messiah, which God made to our first parents, Adam and Eve, and which He renewed to the holy Patriarchs; and through the prophecies and many figures that pointed to Him. We know that He is truly the Messiah and promised Redeemer, because in Him were fulfilled 1. all that the prophecies foretold; 2. all that the figures and types in the Old Testament signified. Prophecies predicted the Redeemer's tribe, and the family from whence He was to arise; His miracles, and the smallest details of His passion and death; His resurrection and ascension into heaven; His spiritual, universal and eternal Kingdom, the Holy Catholic Church. The chief types of our Lord in the Old Testament are the innocent Abel, the High Priest Melchisedek, the sacrifice of Isaac, Joseph sold by his brethren, the prophet Jonas, the paschal lamb, and the brazen serpent lifted up by Moses in the wilderness.

We know that Jesus Christ is truly God; 1. from the witness of the Father when He said, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear Him"; 2. by the witness of Jesus Christ Himself confirmed by the most wonderful miracles; 3. through the teaching of the Apostles; 4. through the constant tradition of the Catholic Church.

The principal miracles wrought by Jesus Christ, over and above His Resurrection, are the restoration of health to the sick, of sight to the blind, of hearing to the deaf and of life to the dead.

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IV.—The Third Article of the Creed

*“who was conceived by the Holy Ghost
born of the Virgin Mary”*

THIS article teaches us that the Son of God took a body and a soul like ours in the most pure womb of the Virgin Mary by the operation of the Holy Ghost, and that He was born of this Virgin.

Moreover, both the Father and the Son concurred with the Holy Ghost to form the body and to create the soul of Jesus Christ. If it is said *“He was conceived of the Holy Ghost”* only, that is because the incarnation of the Son of God is a work of benignity and love, and such works are attributed to the Holy Ghost.

When the Son of God became man He did not cease to be God; and therefore He is both God and man at the same time, perfect God and perfect man. And therefore He has two natures, a human nature and a divine nature.

Jesus Christ, however, has not two persons, but only one person, and that is divine; but He has two wills, a human will and a divine will.

His will, moreover, was free, but He could not do evil, because the power to do evil is a defect, and not a perfection of liberty.

Further, the Son of God and the Son of Mary are one and the same Person, *i.e.*, Jesus Christ, true God and true man. And therefore, too, Mary the Virgin is the Mother of God, because she is the Mother of Jesus Christ, who is truly God.

Mary became the Mother of Jesus Christ solely by the operation and virtue of the Holy Ghost,

and therefore it is of faith that the most holy Virgin was ever a Virgin, and she is called the Virgin by pre-eminence.

V.—The Fourth Article of the Creed

“suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried”

THIS article teaches us that Jesus Christ, in order to redeem the world with His precious blood, suffered under Pontius Pilate, the governor of Judaea, and died on the wood of the Cross, from which He was taken down, and buried.

The word *suffered* expresses all the pains suffered by Jesus Christ in His passion. He suffered as man only, because He could neither suffer nor die as God.

In those days the death penalty of the Cross was the most cruel and ignominious of all punishments. It was Pontius Pilate who condemned Jesus Christ to be crucified, though he had previously acknowledged His innocence, but afterwards basely yielded to the threatening importunity of the people of Jerusalem. Jesus might, indeed, have freed Himself from the hands of the Jews and of Pilate, but He knew that it was the will of His eternal Father that He should suffer and die for our salvation, and therefore He willingly submitted, and even went Himself to meet His enemies, and voluntarily allowed Himself to be taken and led to death.

Jesus was crucified on Mount Calvary. On the Cross He prayed for His enemies, gave His most holy Mother Mary to be the mother of His

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disciple St. John, and, in the person of the beloved disciple, to be the mother of us all; offered His death as a sacrifice, and made satisfaction to God for the sins of men. Nor could any angel have made satisfaction for us, because the sinner's offence against God is, from one point of view, infinite, and demands for its satisfaction a person of infinite merit. Therefore, Christ had to become man, so that He might be able to suffer and die, and He had also to be God, so that His sufferings might have an infinite value, and His merits had to be infinite, because the Majesty of God, which had been outraged by sin, is infinite.

Jesus, it is true, need not have suffered to such an extent as He did, because the least of His sufferings would have sufficed to redeem us, since every act of His has an infinite value; but it was His wish to suffer to such a degree in order to satisfy divine justice still more abundantly, and to show us still more clearly the vastness of His love, and to fill us with a still greater horror of sin.

At the time of His death, the sun was darkened, the earth quaked, the tombs opened and many arose from the dead.

The body of Jesus was buried in a new tomb excavated in the rock of the mountain-side and not far from the place of His Crucifixion.

At His death His divinity was not separated from His body or His soul, but only His soul was separated from His body.

Although Jesus died for all men and made satisfaction for all, nevertheless not all are saved, because not all are willing to acknowledge Him nor to keep His laws, nor do all avail themselves of the means of grace which He has left us. For

our salvation, it is not enough that Jesus has died for us ; but each one of us must apply to himself the merits of His passion and death. This we can do, above all, by means of the Sacraments which He instituted for this very purpose, and since many do not receive the Sacraments or do not receive them rightly, they make the death of Jesus Christ of no avail to themselves.

VI.—The Fifth Article of the Creed

*“ He descended into hell, the third day
He rose again from the dead ”*

THE fifth article teaches us that the soul of Jesus Christ, when separated from the body, went down to the limbo of the holy Fathers, and that on the third day it was again united to the body, never more to be separated from it. By *hell*, here is meant the limbo of the holy Fathers, *i.e.*, the place where the souls of the just were detained while waiting for the redemption of Jesus Christ.

The souls of the holy Fathers did not enter paradise before the death of Jesus Christ, because paradise was closed through the sin of Adam, and it was fitting that Jesus, who re-opened it by His death, should be the first to enter it.

Jesus deferred His resurrection until the third day, to make it clearly evident that He was really dead. His resurrection, too, was not like the resurrection of other men, because He rose again through His own power, and all other men are raised by the power of God.

VII.—The Sixth Article of the Creed

“ He ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty ”

THIS article teaches us that forty days after His resurrection, and in the presence of His disciples, Jesus Christ ascended by Himself into heaven, and, being equal to the Father in glory as God, He was exalted above all angels and all saints as man, and made Lord of all things.

He remained on earth forty days after His resurrection before ascending into heaven, in order to prove by various appearances that He was really risen, and to instruct and confirm the Apostles still more in the verities of the faith.

He ascended into heaven: 1. To take possession of the kingdom, which He had merited by His death. 2. To prepare a place of glory for us, and to be our Mediator and Advocate with the Father. 3. To send the Holy Ghost to His Apostles.

Jesus Christ is said to have ascended into heaven, and His most holy Mother is said to have been assumed, because He, as Man-God, ascended by His own power and merit into heaven, whereas His Mother, being created, although the worthiest of all creatures, went up to heaven through the power and merit of God.

The word *sat* means the peaceful possession which Jesus holds of His glory, and the words *“ at the right hand of God the Father Almighty,”* signify that Jesus has a place of honour far above all creatures.

VIII.—The Seventh Article of the Creed

“from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead”

THIS article teaches us that at the end of the world Jesus Christ will come in all His glory and majesty from heaven to judge all men, good and evil, and to give to each one the reward or the punishment he deserves.

We shall all have to be judged at the general judgement for several reasons : 1. For the glory of God. 2. For the glory of Jesus Christ. 3. For the glory of the Saints. 4. For the confusion of the wicked. 5. Lastly, that the body as well as the soul may have its sentence of reward or punishment.

God's glory will be manifested in the general judgement, because all will acknowledge with what justice He rules the world, although, now, the good are often seen in trouble and the wicked in prosperity. Jesus Christ's glory will shine forth, because, though He was condemned unjustly by men, He will then appear before all the world as Himself, the Supreme Judge. The glory of the Saints will be seen, in that many of them who died, despised by the wicked, will then be glorified in the presence of everybody. And the confusion of the wicked will be very great, especially for those who oppressed the just, and for those who did their best to win the good opinion of the virtuous and good in this life, because the sins they have committed, even their most secret sins, will then be revealed to everyone.

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IX.—The Eighth Article of the Creed

“ I believe in the Holy Ghost ”

THIS article teaches us that the Holy Ghost, the third Person of the Blessed Trinity, is God, eternal, infinite, omnipotent, Creator and Lord of all things, like the Father and the Son.

The Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son by way of will and love, as from one and the same source ; and all three divine Persons are, nevertheless, eternal, because the Father has begotten the Son from all eternity, and, likewise, the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son is from all eternity.

The third Person of the Blessed Trinity is specially called the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit, because His procession from the Father and the Son is by means of breathing and of love.

To the Holy Ghost the work of sanctification is specially attributed, although all three Persons equally concur in this work ; but the special attribution to the Holy Ghost is because it is the work of love, and such works are specially ascribed to the Holy Ghost.

The Holy Ghost descended upon the Apostles on the day of Pentecost, *i.e.*, fifty days after the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, and ten days, after His Ascension. During these ten days the Apostles were gathered together along with the Virgin Mary and other disciples in the cenacle, and continued in prayer, waiting for the Holy Ghost who had been promised by Jesus Christ.

On His descent, the Holy Ghost confirmed the Apostles in the faith, filled them with enlightenment, strength and charity, and with an abun-

dance of all His gifts. Nor was He sent down on the Apostles only, but on all the Church, and on every soul of the faithful, and, as the soul gives life to the body, so does the Holy Ghost vivify the Church with His grace and gifts, establishing in her the kingdom of truth and love, and helping her to give sure guidance to her children on the road to heaven.

X.—THE NINTH ARTICLE OF THE CREED

*“ the Holy Catholic Church, the
Communion of Saints ”*

I.—OF THE CHURCH IN GENERAL

THIS article teaches us that Jesus Christ established on this earth a visible society called the Catholic Church, and that all the members of this Church are in communion with one another.

The article on the Catholic Church immediately follows the one on the Holy Ghost, to show that all the holiness of the Church is derived from the Holy Ghost, who is the author of all sanctity.

The word *Church* means a convocation or gathering together of many people. We are called into the Church by Jesus Christ through a special grace of God, in order that we may, by the light of faith and observance of divine law, give Him the worship which is His due, and attain to eternal life.

Members of the Church are partly in heaven, forming the Church triumphant, partly in purgatory, forming the Church suffering, and partly on earth, making the Church militant. But these three different parts of the Church compose one

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Church and one body, because they have the same head, Jesus Christ, and the same Spirit to animate and unite them, and the same end, which is eternal happiness, already enjoyed by some and looked forward to by the rest.

This article, however, principally refers to the Church militant, in which we actually are now.

2.—OF THE CHURCH IN PARTICULAR

The Catholic Church is the society or congregation of all the baptized, who, living on the earth, profess the faith and obey the laws of Christ, participate in the same sacraments, and obey their lawful pastors, particularly the Roman Pontiff.

In order to be a member of the Church, it is necessary to be baptized, to believe and profess the doctrine of Jesus Christ, and to recognize the Pope and the other lawful Pastors of the Church.

The lawful Pastors of the Church are, the Roman Pontiff, *i.e.*, the Pope, who is the universal Pastor, and the Bishops. Furthermore, under the Bishops and the Pope, other priests, and specially parish priests, have their part in the pastoral office.

The Pope is the universal Pastor, because Jesus Christ said to St. Peter, the first Pope, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven." Therefore, all those who do not recognize the Roman Pontiff as their head, do not belong to the Church of Jesus Christ.

It is easy to distinguish the innumerable societies and sects, which are founded by men and call themselves Christian, from the true Church of Jesus Christ, by four marks. She is One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic.

The true Church is *One*, because her sons of all times and places are united in one faith, one worship, one law, and in the participation in the same sacraments under one and the same visible head, the Roman Pontiff. There cannot be more than one Church, because as there is only one God, one Faith, and one Baptism, so there is not, and there cannot be, more than one true Church. Although the faithful, united together in one nation or in one diocese, are called a church, they are only portions of the universal Church, and with her make up one single Church.

The true Church is called *Holy*, because her invisible head, Jesus Christ, is holy, her members are holy, her faith, laws, and sacraments are holy, and, apart from her, there is not, and cannot be, true holiness.

The true Church is called *Catholic*, which means universal, because she embraces the faithful of all times, all places, and of every age and condition, and all the inhabitants of the world are called to be her members.

She is also called *Apostolic*, because she goes back without a break to the Apostles, and because she believes and teaches all that the Apostles taught and believed; and because she is guided and governed by their lawful successors.

Finally, she is called *Roman*, too, because the four notes of unity, sanctity, catholicity, and apostolicity are only to be found in the Church

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which recognizes as her head the Bishop of Rome, the successor of St. Peter.

The Church of Jesus Christ is constituted as a true and perfect society, and we may distinguish in her, as in a moral individual, both soul and body. The soul of the Church consists in what she has of inward and spiritual, *i.e.*, faith, hope, charity, and the gifts of grace and of the Holy Ghost, and all the heavenly treasures which she derives from the merits of the Redeemer and of the Saints. The body of the Church consists in what she has of visible and external, such as the association of her members, or her worship and ministry of instruction, or her external order and government.

In order to be saved, however, it is not enough to be merely a member of the Church, one must be a living member of her. Her living members are all those, and only those, who are the just, *i.e.*, those who are actually in the grace of God.

The dead members of the Church are those who are in mortal sin.

Out of the Catholic, Apostolic, Roman Church, no one can be saved, as no one could be saved outside of Noe's Ark, which was a type of the Church. Hence, the just in the Old Testament were saved in virtue of the faith they had in Christ who was to come, by means of which they already belonged spiritually to the Church. Whoever, therefore, without any fault of his own, and in good faith, being outside the Church, happens to have been baptized or to have at least an implicit desire for Baptism, and, furthermore, has been sincere in seeking to find the truth, and has done his best to do the will of God, such an one, although separated from the body of the Church,

would still belong to her soul, and therefore be in the way of salvation.

On the other hand, whoever is merely a member of the Catholic Church, but does not practise what she teaches, is a dead member, and therefore will not be saved, because, for the salvation of an adult, not only baptism and faith are necessary, but works in conformity with the faith.

We are, indeed, bound to believe all that the Church teaches, and Jesus Christ declared that he is condemned already who does not believe. And we are also bound to do all that the Church commands, because Jesus Christ said to the Pastors of the Church : "He that heareth you, heareth Me, and he who despiseth you, despiseth Me."

In the things which she proposes for us to believe, the Church cannot err, because, according to the promise of Christ, she is perpetually assisted by the Holy Ghost. And therefore the Catholic Church is infallible, and those, who refuse to accept what she has defined, lose the faith and become heretics.

The Catholic Church may be persecuted, but she cannot be destroyed or perish ; for she will endure to the end of the world, because Jesus Christ will be with her, as He has promised, until the end of the world. She is persecuted as much as she is, because her divine Founder was also persecuted, and because she reproves vice, opposes men's passions, and rebukes all injustice and all error.

It is the duty of every Catholic to have a boundless love for the Church, to think it the highest honour and the greatest happiness to belong to her, and to devote himself to her glory and advancement with all the means at his disposal.

The Ninth Article of the Creed 23

3.—THE CHURCH TEACHING AND THE CHURCH TAUGHT

There is a very notable distinction, dividing the members of the Church into two classes. There are those who command and those who obey, and those who teach and those who are taught.

The part of the Church which teaches, is called the *ecclesia docens* or *teaching Church*; the part of the Church which is taught, is called the *ecclesia discens* or *learning Church*. It is Jesus Christ Himself who established this division in the Church. The Church teaching, and the Church taught or learning, are two distinct parts of one and the same Church, just as in the human body the head is distinct from the other members, and nevertheless with them forms one body.

The teaching Church is made up of all the Bishops with the Roman Pontiff at their head, whether they are dispersed throughout the world or gathered together in Council. The Church taught is made up of all the faithful.

In the Church, authority to teach belongs to the Pope and to the Bishops, and, subject to them, to the rest of the clergy. There is, therefore, no doubt that we are all bound to hear the teaching Church under pain of eternal condemnation, because Jesus Christ said to the Pastors of the Church in the person of the Apostles: "He that heareth you, heareth Me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth Me."

Furthermore, besides the authority to teach, the Church has in particular the power to minister sacred things, to make laws and to require obedience to them. Nor does the power belonging to the members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy

come from the people, and it is heresy to say that it does, but their power comes from God alone. The exercise of this power appertains solely to this hierarchy, that is to say, to the Pope and to the Bishops who are under him.

4.—OF THE POPE AND THE BISHOPS

The Pope, who is called the Supreme or Roman Pontiff, is the successor of St. Peter in the see of Rome, the Vicar of Jesus Christ on earth, and the Head of the visible Church.

The Pope is the successor of St. Peter, because the latter combined in person the office of Bishop of Rome with that of Head of the Church. He set up his see in Rome by divine order, and there died, so that he who becomes Bishop of Rome is also heir of all his authority.

The Roman Pontiff is the Vicar of Jesus Christ, because he represents Him upon earth and takes His place in the government of the Church. He is head of the visible Church, because he rules it visibly with the same authority as that of Jesus Christ who is its invisible Head.

The dignity of the Pope is the highest dignity of all upon earth, and it gives him supreme and immediate power over all and each, both over pastors and people.

The Pope cannot err. He is infallible in defining matters of faith and morals. This infallibility he receives through the promise of Christ, and through the continual assistance of the Holy Ghost. He is infallible, when, in his office of Pastor and Teacher of all Christians, and in virtue of his supreme authority, he defines a doctrine touching faith or morals to be held by all the Church.

The Ninth Article of the Creed 25

Whoever does not believe the solemn definitions of the Pope, or even doubts them, sins against the faith, and if he remains obdurate in his unbelief, he is no longer a Catholic, but a heretic.

God has given the Pope the gift of infallibility, so that we may all be sure and certain of the truth which the Church teaches. The dogma of papal infallibility was defined by the Church at the Vatican Council, and if anyone presumes to contradict this definition, he is a heretic. When, however, the Church defined this dogma, she did not set up a new truth as of faith, but only, in order to combat new errors, laid it down that the infallibility of the Pope, as contained in Holy Scripture and tradition, is a truth revealed by God, and that it must be believed as an article of the faith. Therefore, every Catholic is bound to acknowledge the Pope as universal Father, Pastor, and Teacher, and to stand firmly united with him both in heart and mind.

Next to the Pope, by God's ordinance, the persons most to be revered in the Church are the Bishops.

The Bishops are the Pastors of the faithful, set by the Holy Ghost to govern the Church of God in the sees assigned to them in dependence upon the Bishop of Rome. In his own diocese the Bishop is the lawful Pastor, the Father and Teacher, set over all the faithful, ecclesiastics or layfolk, within his diocese. He is called the lawful Pastor, because of the jurisdiction or authority given him to govern the faithful of his own diocese, a power which is committed to him according to the rules and laws of the Church.

The Pope is the successor of St. Peter, the chief of the Apostles; and the Bishops are the

successors of the Apostles in what concerns the ordinary government of the Church. Therefore, all the faithful, ecclesiastics or layfolk, must keep united heart and mind with their own Bishop in communion with the Apostolic See ; and it is their duty to respect, love, and honour him, and to render him obedience in all that concerns the care of souls and the spiritual government of his diocese.

In the care of souls the Bishop is helped by priests, and particularly by the parochial clergy. The parish priest is deputed to preside over and rule, in dependence upon the Bishop, that part of a diocese which is called a parish, and it is the duty of the faithful to keep in unity with their parish priest, to listen to him in a teachable spirit, and to yield him respect and submission in all that has to do with the care of the parish.

5.—OF THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS

By the *Communion of Saints*, we are taught that in the Church, through the intimate union existing between all her members, the spiritual benefits, whether inward or external, which belong to her, are common to all.

The common benefits of the Church, which are inward, are: the grace conferred by the sacraments, faith, hope, charity, the infinite merits of Jesus Christ, the superabundant merits of the Virgin and of the Saints, and the fruit of all the good works which are done in the Church herself. The common benefits of the Church, which are external, are: the sacraments, the sacrifice of Holy Mass, the public prayers, the religious functions, and all the other exterior practices which bind the faithful together.

The Ninth Article of the Creed 27

Those Christians who are in the grace of God enter into participation in all the internal benefits, but those who are in mortal sin do not share in them. This is because the grace of God, which is the supernatural life of the soul, is that which unites the faithful with God and with Jesus Christ as His living members, and makes them capable of doing works worthy of the life eternal; and because those who are in mortal sin, being without the grace of God, are excluded from perfect communion in the spiritual benefits, and cannot do works which merit eternal life.

Nevertheless, even those who are in mortal sin are not without some advantage to be derived from the inward and spiritual benefits of the Church, so far as they keep the mark of being Christians, which is, indeed, indelible, and also the virtue of faith, which is the root of all justification, and they are helped by the prayers and good works of the faithful to obtain the grace of being converted to God. Moreover, those who are in mortal sin are able to share in the external benefits of the Church, provided that they are not cut off from the Church by excommunication.

All those who are in communion with the Church are called saints, because they are all called to holiness, and were sanctified in Baptism, and many of them have already attained to perfect holiness. Moreover, the communion of saints even extends to heaven and to purgatory, because charity unites together the three parts of the Church; the Church triumphant, the Church suffering, and the Church militant. The Saints pray to God for us and for the souls in purgatory, and we ought to honour and glorify the Saints, and we can procure alleviation for the souls in purgatory

by applying on their behalf our Masses, our alms, and our indulgences and other good works.

6.—OF THOSE WHO ARE OUTSIDE THE CHURCH

In the world to come, the damned are outside of the communion of Saints, and, in this world, those who do not belong either to the soul or to the body of the Church, *i.e.*, those who are in mortal sin and are also outside of the true Church. Separated from her are also unbelievers, Jews, heretics, apostates, schismatics and the excommunicated.

Unbelievers are those who are not baptized and who do not believe in Jesus Christ, either believing and worshipping false divinities, as idolators ; or, if they admit that there is one true God, not believing in Christ the Messias as having come or as coming again in the person of Jesus, as the Mahometans and the like. The Jews are those who accept the laws of Moses, but have not been baptized and do not believe in Jesus Christ. Heretics are baptized persons who obstinately refuse to believe some revealed truth of God taught as being of faith by the Church ; and such persons are the Arians, the Nestorians, and the various Protestant sects. Apostates are those who reject or deny openly by some external act, the faith they once believed. Schismatics are Christians who do not deny any dogma explicitly, but separate themselves of their own accord from the Church and her lawful pastors. Finally, the excommunicated are those who, for some very grave fault, are condemned by the Pope or the Bishop, and are therefore cut off, as unworthy, from the body of the Church, which waits for and desires their return.

The excommunicated are excluded from public

The Tenth Article of the Creed 29

prayers, the sacraments, indulgences and ecclesiastical burial. There are, however, several ways in which we may help the excommunicated, and all the others who are outside the true Church, as, for instance, by helpful advice, prayers and good works, imploring God in His mercy to give them the grace of conversion to the faith and of entering into the communion of Saints.

XI.—The Tenth Article of the Creed

“The forgiveness of sins”

THIS article teaches us that Jesus Christ left His Church the power to forgive sins. This she can do, however many or grave the sins may be, because Jesus Christ has given her full power to bind and to loose.

Those in the Church who have power to remit sins are, in the first place, the Pope, who alone possesses this power in its fullness; then the Bishops, and, in dependence on the Bishops, the priests.

The Church forgives sins through the merits of Jesus Christ, when she confers the sacraments instituted by Him for that purpose, particularly the sacraments of Baptism and Penance.

XII.—The Eleventh Article of the Creed

“The resurrection of the body”

THIS article teaches us that all men will rise again, and that every soul will resume the body which it had in this world.

The resurrection of the dead will be through the

power of God Almighty, to whom nothing is impossible. It will take place at the end of the world, and then will follow the Last Judgement.

It is God's will that the body should rise with the soul, because, since the soul does well or ill while united with the body, it is fitting that both should be punished or rewarded together.

There will be a great difference between the bodies of the elect and those of the damned, because only the bodies of the former will, like the risen Jesus, possess the attributes of glorious bodies. These attributes are: 1. *Impassibility*, which will prevent their being subject to any evil or pain, nor will they need food or rest, or anything else. 2. *Brightness*, whereby they will shine like the sun and the stars. 3. *Activity*, enabling them to pass in an instant and without fatigue from one place to another, and from heaven to earth. 4. *Immateriality*, so that they can go through any solid substance without hindrance, as Jesus Christ did after His resurrection. The bodies of the damned will not have these attributes, but will bear the terrible brand of eternal reprobation.

XIII.—The Twelfth Article of the Creed

“ and life everlasting ”

THIS last article of the Creed teaches that after this life there is another, either eternally happy for the elect in paradise, or else eternally miserable for the damned in hell.

The bliss of paradise is beyond our comprehension, because it passes the understanding of our limited intelligence, and because the goods of

The Twelfth Article of the Creed 31

heaven cannot be compared with the goods of this world.

The happiness of the elect consists in seeing, loving, and always possessing God, who is the source of every good. The misery of the damned consists in ever being cut off from the vision of God and punished with eternal torments in hell.

The benefits of heaven and the evils of hell are at present only for the soul, because only the soul is now in heaven or hell, but after the resurrection of the flesh, men will be happy or tormented in the entirety of their human nature, both soul and body, for all eternity.

The nature and duration of the benefits or evils of heaven or hell will be equivalent, but in measure and degree, they will be greater or less according to the merits or demerits of each individual.

The Creed ends with the word "*Amen*," with which prayers also conclude. At the end of a prayer, this word means "So be it," but at the end of the Creed, it means "So it is," *i.e.*, I believe all that is contained in the twelve Articles of this Creed is most true, and I am more certain of their truth than if it were proved by ocular demonstration.

PART II

I.—Prayer

I.—ON PRAYER IN GENERAL

PRAYER is a lifting up of the mind to God in order to adore and thank Him, and to ask Him for what we need.

There are two kinds of prayer, mental and vocal. Mental prayer is made with the mind only ; vocal prayer is expressed in words, accompanied with attention of the mind and devotion of the heart.

Prayer may also be distinguished into private and public prayer. Private prayer is that which is offered by each person in particular for himself or for others. Public prayer is that which is offered by the sacred ministry in the name of the Church and for the salvation of the faithful. That prayer may also be called public, which is made in common and in public by the faithful, as in processions, pilgrimages, and in churches.

Our hope of obtaining from God the graces that we need is founded on the promises of God Almighty, most faithful and true, and upon the merits of Jesus Christ. Hence, we should ask God for such graces as we require, in the name of Jesus Christ, as He Himself has taught us and as is the custom of the Church, for her prayers always end with the words *per Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum*, which mean “through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

But our principal reason for asking for graces through Jesus Christ is because He is our Mediator, and it is through Him alone that we can approach the throne of God.

Often our prayers are not answered, because we ask for things which are not helpful towards our eternal salvation, or because we do not pray in the way that we ought.

Before all, and above all, we ought to ask God for His glory, and for our own eternal salvation and for the means to obtain it. But it is also allowable to ask Him even for temporal goods, provided that their granting be in accordance with His holy will, and that they be no impediment to our eternal salvation.

Although God knows all our needs, we ought nevertheless to pray to Him, because He wishes us to do so, and in order to thank Him as the Giver of every good gift, and to show Him our humble submission, and that we may merit His favours.

The best way of making our prayers efficacious is to be in a state of grace, or, if we are not so, at any rate to desire to return to such a state.

In order to pray well, recollection, humility, confidence, perseverance and resignation are specially required.

Recollection means that we must remember that we are speaking to God, and, therefore, that we must pray with all reverence and devotion, avoiding distractions as far as possible, *i.e.*, all thoughts which are foreign to prayer. If such distractions occur through our own fault or negligence in repelling them, they rob our prayer of its merits ; but if we do our best to be recollected before God, they will not take from the value of

our prayer, but may even add thereto. In order to rid ourselves of distractions, we should avoid all occasions of them, and, while we are praying, bear in mind that we are in the presence of God, who both sees and hears us.

In order to pray with true humility, we must honestly recognize and acknowledge our own unworthiness, impotence and need, and our demeanour should be modest and grave.

Confidence implies that we have a firm hope of being heard, if obtaining our petitions will be for the glory of God and for our own true welfare.

If we pray with perseverance, we shall not give up praying because we do not see an immediate answer to our prayers, but we shall continue to pray even more fervently.

Resignation is needed, because we must conform to the will of God, who knows, better than we, what is necessary to our eternal salvation, even in those cases in which our prayers are not answered. If, indeed, our prayer is offered in the right way, it is never unanswered, but God answers it in the way He judges to be most profitable for our eternal salvation, and not always in accordance with our will.

In us prayer produces the following effects : it makes us acknowledge our dependence upon God as our supreme Lord in all things ; it makes us lift up our thoughts to the things of heaven, progress in virtue, obtain the mercy of God, strengthens us against temptations, comforts us in tribulations, helps us in our needs and obtains for us the grace of final perseverance.

We should have to recourse to prayer, specially in times of danger or temptation and at the hour of death ; and, besides this, it is a duty to pray

frequently, and it is well to pray every morning and evening, and at the beginning of every important act during the course of the day. It is, likewise, a duty to pray for everybody, *i.e.*, for ourselves, our parents and relations, our superiors, benefactors, friends and enemies, for the conversion of poor sinners and of those who are outside of the true Church, and for the holy souls in purgatory.

II.—Of the Our Father

I.—OF THE “OUR FATHER” IN GENERAL

THE best of all vocal prayers is that which was taught us by Jesus Christ Himself, *i.e.*, the *Pater noster*, or Our Father. It is the best of prayers, because Christ Himself taught it, and because it clearly sums up in a few words everything we can hope for from God, and because it is the rule and model for all other prayers.

Moreover, the *Pater noster* is the most efficacious of all prayers, because it is the most acceptable to God, since, in using it, we pray with the same words which were given us by His divine Son,

The *Pater noster* is called the “Lord’s Prayer,” because our Lord Jesus Christ taught it us with His own lips.

The *Pater noster* consists of an introduction and seven petitions, as follows :

Introduction : Our Father who art in heaven ;

1. Hallowed be Thy name.
2. Thy kingdom come.
3. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
4. Give us this day our daily bread.
5. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.

6. And lead us not into temptation.

7. But deliver us from evil. Amen.

The introductory words, "*Our Father*," are meant to awaken our confidence in the infinite loving-kindness of God, since we are His sons ; sons of God, because He has created us in His image, and keeps and governs us by His providence, and because, in His wonderful benevolence, He has adopted us in Baptism as brothers of Jesus Christ and co-heirs with Him of eternal glory.

We call God "*our*" Father and not "*my*" Father, because we are all His sons, and therefore we ought all to look upon and love one another like brothers, and also to pray for one another.

The words, "*who art in heaven*," do not mean that God is not everywhere, for He is so ; but they are intended to lift up our hearts to heaven, where God manifests Himself in glory to His children.

2.—THE FIRST PETITION

"*Hallowed be Thy name*"

In saying these words, we pray that God may be known, honoured and served throughout the world, and by ourselves in particular.

This petition prays that infidels and unbelievers may come to the knowledge of God, that heretics may acknowledge their errors, that schismatics may return to the unity of the Church, that sinners may repent, and that the just may persevere in right-doing.

We begin by asking that God's name may be hallowed, because the glory of God ought to be nearer to our hearts than any benefit or good for ourselves. God's glory may be obtained by prayer,

by good example, and by directing all our thoughts, desires and deeds to Him.

3.—THE SECOND PETITION

“Thy Kingdom Come”

In these words, a threefold spiritual kingdom is included, *i.e.*, the kingdom of God within us, which is the realm of grace; the kingdom of God on earth, which is the holy Catholic Church; and the kingdom of God in heaven, which is paradise.

In the order of grace, we ask that God may reign in us through His sanctifying grace, whereby He is pleased to dwell in us as in His own royal palace; and that we may remain united to Him through the virtues of faith, hope and charity, whereby He rules our minds, hearts and wills. In the sphere of the Church, we pray for her diffusion and propagation throughout the world for the salvation of all men. Lastly, in the domain of glory, we beg that we may one day be admitted to paradise, for which we were created, and where we shall be entirely happy.

4.—THE THIRD PETITION

“Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven”

In this petition we ask for grace to do the will of God in all things, obeying His holy laws as promptly as the angels and the saints obey them in heaven. We ask, too, for grace to correspond with thoughts divinely suggested to our minds, and to live fully resigned to the will of God, when He calls upon us to endure tribulations.

The necessity for performing the will of God is as great as the necessity of securing eternal salvation, and they are inseparable from one another;

for Jesus Christ says that only those shall enter into the kingdom of God who have done the will of His Father. God's will may be learnt, in particular, through the Church, and from our spiritual superiors, appointed by God to guide us in the way of salvation. Moreover, the divine will may be ascertained by means of thoughts suggested by God, and from the circumstances in which our Lord places us. But in all circumstances, whether prosperous or adverse, we should acknowledge the will of God, who even in this life orders everything, or at any rate permits it, for our good.

5.—THE FOURTH PETITION

"Give us this day our daily bread"

This petition asks for what is necessary for us every day for both body and soul.

For our soul we beg the sustenance of the spiritual life, *i.e.*, we pray God to give us His grace, of which we are constantly in need. The life of the soul is fed specially with the food of the divine word, and with the most holy Sacrament of the altar.

For our bodies we beg for what is necessary for the sustenance of our temporal life.

We say "*Give us this day our daily bread,*" using the word "*our*" to shut out any desire of the goods of other people, and hence we pray that God may help us in all just and lawful earnings, so that we may procure our living by our own work, and not by robbery or sharp practices.

We say give "*us*" and not "*me*" to remind ourselves that, as all we have comes to us from God, if He provides us with abundance, He does it that we may distribute what is superfluous to the poor.

The word "*daily*" is inserted, because we ought to desire what is necessary for living, and not an abundance of things to eat and of earthly goods. And the word "*to-day*" suggests that we should not be too anxious about the future, but pray for what is necessary for the present.

6.—THE FIFTH PETITION

"Forgive us our trespasses (or debts), as we forgive them that trespass against us (or our debtors)"

In this petition we ask God to forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who offend us.

Our sins are called *debts*, because we ought to satisfy the justice of God either in this world or in the next.

If we do not forgive our neighbours, we have no right to hope that God will forgive us, inasmuch as we condemn ourselves when we ask God to forgive us as we forgive our neighbours.

7.—THE SIXTH PETITION

"Lead us not into temptation"

When we say this, we ask God to set us free from all temptations, either by not allowing us to be tempted, or by giving us grace not to be overcome by them.

Temptations are an incentive to sin: they come from the devil, or from the wicked, or from our passions. There is no sin in having temptations, but it is a sin to consent to them, or to expose oneself voluntarily to the danger of consenting to them. God allows us to be tempted to prove our fidelity, and to increase our virtues and our merits. But in order to avoid temptations, we ought to flee dangerous occasions, to keep

guard over our senses, to receive the Sacraments frequently and to make use of prayer.

8.—THE SEVENTH PETITION

“ Deliver us from evil ”

In these words we ask God to deliver us from evils past, present and to come, especially from the greatest of all evils, which is sin, and from eternal damnation, which is its punishment.

We say “*evil*” and not “*evils*,” because we cannot expect to be free from all evils in this life, but only from those which may hurt our souls, and therefore we ask to be delivered from evil in general, that is to say, from all that God sees to be evil for us. But it is quite legitimate to ask to be delivered from any evil in particular, always putting ourselves under the will of God, who is able even to order this particular trial to the profit of our soul. For trials and tribulations help us to do penance for our sins, to practise virtues, and, above all, to imitate Jesus Christ our Head, to whom it is but just that we should conform in suffering if we would be partakers of His glory.

The *Amen* at the end of the *Pater noster* means “So be it, thus I wish, thus I beg the Lord, and thus I hope.”

To obtain the graces asked for in the *Pater noster*, it should be recited without haste, giving heed to the meaning, not merely with the lips, but with the heart. It should be said every day, because every day we need the help of God.

III.—The Ave Maria

THE angelic salutation, *Ave Maria*, is used after the *Pater noster*, as a means whereby we have recourse to the most holy Virgin. It is called the

angelic salutation, because it begins with the words with which the archangel Gabriel saluted the Virgin Mary.

The words of the *Ave Maria* are partly those of the archangel Gabriel, partly those of St. Elizabeth, and partly those of the Church.

The words of the archangel are : “ *Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee ; blessed art thou among women.*” These words he addressed to Mary when he went to announce to her on behalf of God the mystery of the Incarnation which was to come to pass in her. When, therefore, we address the Blessed Virgin with the angelic salutation, we rejoice with her as we recall the singular graces and privileges which God has granted her, preferring her above all other creatures.

The words of St. Elizabeth are : “ *Thou art blessed among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.*” These words were spoken by St. Elizabeth under the inspiration of God, three months before she gave birth to St. John the Baptist, and when she was visited by the most holy Virgin, who already bore her divine Son in her womb. When we repeat these words of St. Elizabeth, we rejoice with Blessed Mary in her most high dignity of being Mother of God, and we bless God and thank Him for giving us Jesus Christ through Mary.

The rest of the words were added by the Church. In these final words of the *Ave Maria*, we ask for the protection of the most holy Virgin in the course of this life, and especially at the hour of our death, in which we have the greatest need of it.

After the *Pater noster* we say the *Ave Maria* rather than any other prayer, because the most

holy Virgin is our most powerful advocate with God next to Jesus Christ, and therefore, after saying the prayer taught by Jesus Christ, we beg our Blessed Lady to obtain for us the graces which we have prayed for. As Mother of God, the most holy Virgin is thus powerful, and it is impossible for her to go unheard by Him. Moreover, the Saints teach us by their devotion to Mary that those who are devout to her are loved and protected by her with a most tender maternal love, and that through her they are certain to find Jesus and to get to heaven.

The devotion, which is specially recommended by the Church with regard to our Lady, is the recitation of the holy Rosary.

IV.—The Invocation of Saints

It is a most profitable practice to pray to the Saints, and every Christian ought to do it. We should specially invoke our Guardian Angels, St. Joseph, the patron of the Church, the holy Apostles, the patron Saints whose names we bear, and the Saints who are patrons of our diocese and parish.

The difference between the prayers that we make to God and those which we address to the Saints is this: we pray to God as the source of all graces to give us what is good and to deliver us from evil, but we pray to the Saints, or more strictly speaking, invoke them, as advocates with God, that they may intercede for us. And therefore, if we say that a Saint has given us a grace, we mean to say that such a Saint has obtained such and such a grace for us from God.

PART III

I.—The Commandments of God and of the Church

THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD IN GENERAL

THE commandments of the law of God are ten ;
I am the Lord thy God :

1. Thou shalt not have any other God but Me.
2. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.
3. Remember to keep the feasts holy.
4. Honour thy father and thy mother.
5. Thou shalt not kill.
6. Thou shalt not commit fornication.
7. Thou shalt not steal.
8. Thou shalt not bear false witness.
9. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife.
10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods.

These rules are called commandments of God, because God Himself has stamped them on the mind and soul of every man, and promulgated them under the old law engraved on two tables of stone, and Jesus Christ has confirmed them under the new law.

The commandments of the first table are the first three, which regard God immediately, and the duties which we owe to Him.

The commandments of the second table are the last seven, which concern our neighbour and our duties towards him.

All men are bound to keep the commandments, because all men must live according to the will of God who made man, and a grave transgression of one single commandment is enough to deserve hell. Moreover, there is no doubt that all men can obey God's commandments, because He does not command anything that is impossible, and He gives grace to keep them to whoever asks Him for it in the way in which he ought.

In each commandment there are two sides to be considered, the positive, and the negative, *i.e.*, what is ordered and what is forbidden.

II.—The Commandments which concern God

1.—THE FIRST COMMANDMENT

“I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt not have any other God but Me”

HERE the first words are introductory to all the ten commandments, and *“I am the Lord thy God”* is said to show that we acknowledge that God, as our Lord and Creator, has the right to command what He wishes, and that we, His creatures, are bound to obey Him. By the words, *“Thou shalt not have any other God but Me,”* God bids us acknowledge, adore, love and serve Him alone as our supreme Lord.

This command is fulfilled by the practice of inward and outward worship. Inward worship is the honour paid to God with the spirit only, or with the mind and will. Outward worship is homage given to God by means of outward acts and sensible things. It is not enough to worship God with the heart and inwardly alone, but He must be adored outwardly also, with the body

Commandments concerning God 45

as well as the soul, because He is the Creator and absolute Lord of the one as well as the other. Furthermore, it is quite impossible to divorce outward worship from the inward, because if the latter be separated from the former, then the former is robbed of life, merit and efficacy, like a body which is without a soul.

The first commandment forbids idolatry, superstition, sacrilege, heresy and every sort of sin against religion.

Idolatry is giving to any creature, for instance, to a statue, a picture or a man, the supreme worship of adoration due to God. This prohibition is found in Holy Scripture expressed in the following words : "*Thou shalt not make to thyself a graven thing, nor the likeness of anything that is in heaven above or in the earth beneath, nor of those things that are in the waters under the earth. Thou shalt not adore them nor serve them.*" Yet it must not be supposed that these words forbid every sort of image ; but only those of false divinities, made for the purpose of adoration, as were those of the idolators. This is such an obvious truth that God Himself bade Moses to make some, such as the two statues of the cherubims in the ark and the brazen serpent in the wilderness.

Superstition is any devotion contrary to the teaching and custom of the Church, as, for instance, to attribute to any act or thing taken by itself a supernatural power which it does not possess.

Sacrilege is the profanation of a place, person or thing, consecrated to God and set apart for His worship.

Heresy is a culpable error of the intellect.

whereby some truth of the faith is obstinately denied.

Furthermore, the first commandment forbids any intercourse with evil spirits, and any association with antichristian sects. Whoever has recourse to the devil or invokes him commits a tremendous sin, because the devil is the most perverse of all the enemies of God and man. All the practices of spiritualism are unlawful, because they are superstitious, and frequently they are involved in demoniacal intervention, and therefore they are rightly prohibited by the Church.

This commandment does not, however, forbid us to honour and invoke Angels and Saints ; but, on the contrary, we ought to do this, because it is a good and profitable thing to do, and it is highly recommended by the Church, since Saints and Angels are friends of God and are our intercessors with Him.

Although Jesus Christ is our only Mediator with God, we have recourse to the mediation of our Lady and the Saints, because Jesus Christ is our Mediator, as being both God and man, and He alone, in virtue of His own merits, has reconciled us with God, and therefore obtains for us all graces from God ; yet our Lady and the Saints, in virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, and through the love which unites them with God and with us, help us by their intercession to obtain the graces which we implore, and this is one of the great benefits of the communion of Saints.

It is also right to honour the sacred images of Jesus Christ and of the Saints, because such honour is referred to their persons. And we also honour the relics of the Saints, because their bodies were living members of Jesus Christ and

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temples of the Holy Ghost, and will have a glorious resurrection to eternal life.

Between the worship we pay to God and that which we pay to the Saints, there is this difference, that we adore God for His infinite perfections, but the Saints, although we do not adore them, we honour and venerate as friends of God and as our intercessors with Him. The worship given to God is called *latria* or *adoration*, and that which we give to the Saints is called *dulia*, i.e., *veneration* of the *servants of God*, but the worship which is paid in particular to the Blessed Virgin Mary is called *hyperdulia*, i.e., *special veneration*, which we pay to her as the Mother of God.

2.—THE SECOND COMMANDMENT

“Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain”

This commandment forbids : 1. Mentioning the name of God without respect. 2. Blaspheming or speaking ill of God, the Blessed Virgin, or the Saints. 3. Making false or unnecessary oaths, or swearing in any unlawful way.

Uttering the name of God without respect, is to pronounce His holy name or to speak of anything which has some particular connection with God, as, for instance, the name of Jesus, or of Mary, or of the Saints, in anger or in jest, or in any other irreverent manner.

Both blasphemy and imprecation are forbidden by this commandment. The difference between them is this : blasphemy is cursing or wishing ill to God or our Lady or the Saints, whereas imprecation is cursing or wishing ill to oneself or one's neighbour.

Using an oath or swearing is calling God as

witness of anything which is affirmed or promised. Swearing is not always forbidden, but it is lawful and honourable to God when it is done under necessity, and if the oath is taken with truth, sound judgement and justice. Truth is wanting, if anyone affirms with an oath what he knows or believes to be false, and when he promises in this way to do something which he has no intention of performing. Good judgement and prudence are wanting, if the oath be taken without due consideration or for things of no importance. Lastly, justice is wanting, when anyone swears to do something unlawful or wrong, as, for instance, to take revenge, rob or steal, or the like. In such cases, not only are we not obliged to keep such oaths, but it would be a sin to keep them, because the acts are forbidden by the law of God or of the Church.

He who swears falsely commits a mortal sin, because he gravely dishonours God, who is infinite truth, by calling Him as witness to what is false.

The second commandment orders us to honour the holy name of God, and, besides this, to fulfil our oaths and vows. By a vow is meant a promise made to God of something which is good and within our power and better than its opposite, and it binds the maker of the vow as if it were a command. The Bishop of the diocese or the Supreme Pontiff may be asked to commute or dispense from a vow, according to the nature of the vow. The transgression of a vow is a sin, and, therefore, vows should not be made without ripe reflection, nor, ordinarily, without consulting a confessor or some other prudent person, so as to avoid any risk of incurring the danger of

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sinning. Vows can only be made to God, and not to our Lady or the Saints; but they can be promised to God in honour of our Lady and the Saints.

3.—THE THIRD COMMANDMENT

“Remember to keep the feasts holy”

This commandment orders us to honour God by worshipping Him on festival days.

There were feast-days under the old law, such as Sabbaths and other solemn days. Under the new law there are the Sundays and other feasts ordained by the Church.

The Sunday was substituted for the Sabbath, and is called the Lord's Day, because Jesus Christ Our Lord rose again on this day. Therefore, on Sundays, Christians are bidden to attend Holy Mass devoutly.

A good Christian keeps feast-days holy:

1. By attending Christian doctrine, which is imparted by sermons and by the divine offices.
2. By receiving frequently, and with devout dispositions, the sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist.
3. By the practice of prayer and of works of Christian charity towards his neighbour.

This commandment also forbids servile works and any work that hinders the worship of God. The servile works forbidden on feast-days are manual works, which are labours in which the body is more engaged than the mind, such as are ordinarily done by servants, workmen and artizans.

To toil thus on a feast-day is to commit a mortal sin, although, if the time spent in such toil be brief, the gravity of the fault is excused; and, further, works indispensable for life or for

the service of God are allowed, and any others done for some serious reason; though leave should be asked beforehand from the parish priest, if possible.

The object of this prohibition is to enable people to attend divine worship more easily, and to mind the salvation of the soul, and also that they may may rest from their labour; and, therefore, no honest and healthy amusements are forbidden on feast days. On such days, however, special care must be taken to avoid all sin and whatever may lead to sin, such as amusements and company that are dangerous.

III.—The Commandments which concern our Neighbour

I.—THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT

“*Honour thy father and thy mother*”

THIS commandment orders us to respect our father and mother, and to obey them in all that is not sin, and to help them in their spiritual and temporal needs.

It forbids us to offend our parents by word or deed or in any other way.

The words “*father and mother*” used in this commandment also comprise all our superiors, whether ecclesiastical or lay, to whom we owe obedience or respect.

The authority of parents to command their children, and the obligation of children to obey, come from God, who established and ordered the family, so that man might find therein the first means required for his material and spiritual perfection.

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It is the duty of parents to love, nourish and maintain their children, to provide for their religious and civil education, to keep them from occasions of sin, to correct their faults, and to help them to embrace the state to which they are called by God.

God has provided an example of perfect family life in the Holy Family, in which Jesus Christ lived subject to His Blessed Mother Mary and to St. Joseph for thirty years, that is to say, until He began to carry out the mission of preaching the Gospel, entrusted to Him by the Eternal Father.

If families lived alone, separated from each other, they would not be able to satisfy all their own requirements, but it is necessary that they should be united in a civil society in order to help each other towards perfection and general happiness. Hence comes the existence of civil society, which is the union of many families, depending on the authority of a single head, to help one another mutually to attain mutual perfection and temporal felicity.

The governing authority in a civil society comes from God, who wishes it to be constituted for the common weal. Hence, all who belong to civil society are bound to respect and obey the authority which comes from God, for this is required by the common good. And, therefore, all the laws which are laid down by civil authority are to be obeyed, provided that they are not contrary to the laws of God ; and, for this, we have only to follow the precept and example of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Members of a civil society are, further, bound to live together in concord ; and each one must

employ the means and powers at his disposal to the best of his ability, to make the society to which he belongs virtuous, peaceful, orderly and prosperous for the general weal.

2.—THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT

“Thou shalt not kill”

This commandment forbids killing, beating, striking, or doing any other harm to our neighbour in body, either by our own act or through the acts of others, as, for instance, giving offence by insulting words, or wishing evil to anyone. The commandment also forbids killing one's self, *i.e.*, suicide.

Killing our neighbour is a very grave sin, because the murderer rashly usurps the prerogative which God alone possesses over man's life; and because he destroys the security of human society, and, in taking away his neighbour's life, he deprives him of the greatest natural good which he possesses in the world.

It is, however, lawful to kill one's neighbour when fighting in a just war, and when executing a death sentence pronounced by lawful authority in punishment of some crime, and, lastly, when defending one's life by indispensable and just means against an unjust attack.

Further, the fifth commandment forbids even injuries to the spiritual life of one's neighbour by giving scandal. Scandal is doing, saying, or omitting to do anything which is to others an occasion of sin. It is a grave sin, because it tends to destroy God's noblest work, which is redemption, by losing souls; it causes the death of the soul by depriving it of the life of grace, which is far more

valuable than the life of the body ; and it is the cause of a multitude of sins ; and therefore God threatens the giver of scandal with the severest penalties.

This commandment forbids suicide, because man is not the master of his own life, nor of anyone else's life. Hence the Church punishes the suicide by depriving him of ecclesiastical burial.

Duelling is also forbidden by this commandment, because duelling partakes of the malice of suicide and of homicide, and therefore whoever voluntarily takes part in a duel, even though it be as a spectator only, is excommunicated. Even when there is no danger of death, but only of intentional blows and wounds mutually attempted or given, duelling remains forbidden ; nor can honour be pleaded as an excuse, because there is no true satisfaction to the requirements of wounded honour in an unjust, irrational, and barbarous act, such as duelling.

On the other hand, this commandment bids us to forgive our enemies and to wish well to all men.

Lastly, it does not suffice for a person who has wronged his neighbour to make a confession, but he must also repair the wrong he has done by making good any injuries or losses he has caused, by withdrawing any erroneous information he has spread, and by giving a good example.

3.—THE SIXTH AND NINTH COMMANDMENTS

“ Thou shalt not commit adultery ”

“ Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife ”

The sixth commandment forbids every act, look or word against chastity and unfaithfulness in matrimony.

The ninth commandment forbids expressly every desire contrary to the oath of mutual fidelity which the married pair have sworn to each other in their marriage contract ; and it forbids even guilty thoughts or the desire of doing acts forbidden by the sixth commandment.

Impurity is a most grave and abominable sin in the eyes of God and men ; for it degrades man to the state of the brute, and draws him into many other sins and vices, and provokes the most terrible penalties in this life and in that which is to come.

It must not, however, be supposed that every thought occurring to the mind against purity is in itself a sin, but it should be regarded as a temptation and incentive to sin, and such thoughts, even if they do not result in acts or consequences, become sins, if we guiltily afford grounds for them, or consent to them, or expose ourselves to the proximate danger of consenting to them.

Furthermore, the sixth commandment bids us be chaste and modest in look, demeanour and word ; and the ninth prescribes chastity and purity even within us, *i.e.*, in mind and heart.

The only way to keep these two commandments is to pray frequently from our hearts to God, to be devout to the Virgin Mary, the Mother of purity, to bear in mind that God sees us, to think of death, the divine judgements, and the Passion of Jesus Christ, to keep watch over our senses, to practise Christian mortification, and to frequent the sacraments with proper dispositions. To preserve chastity it is well to avoid idleness, bad company, reading bad newspapers and books, intemperance, looking at indecent pictures, licentious performances, risky conversations, and all other occasions of sin.

4.—THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT

“Thou shalt not steal”

This commandment forbids taking or keeping other people's goods unlawfully or for procuring loss to our neighbour in his possessions in any other way.

Robbery is taking away other people's belongings against the will of the owner, that is to say, when he has every reason and right to be unwilling to be deprived of them.

To steal is to sin against justice, and it wrongs our neighbour by taking away from him and retaining, against his own good right and wish, what is his. Our neighbour's possessions are whatever belongs to him, and that of which he has the property or use, or which he holds on deposit.

The seventh commandment may be broken in two ways : by stealing, or by rapine. Stealing is taking what belongs to others secretly ; rapine is taking it with violence and openly.

Things belonging to another may be taken if the owner is not opposed to it, or if his opposition is unjust, as might happen in the case of someone in extreme necessity, provided that he were to take only as much as was strictly indispensable to suffice for his urgent and extreme necessity.

Furthermore, anyone may be injured in his belongings not only by stealing and rapine, but also by means of fraud or usury, or of any other unjust procedure with regard to his property. Fraud occurs when anyone is cheated in business by false weights, measures or money, or by bad goods, by forging writings or documents ; finally, by practising deceit in purchasing or selling, and in

any other sort of contract, and also by being unwilling to give what is just or what has been agreed upon. Usury occurs, when unlawful interest is exacted without any legitimate claim for any loan, taking advantage of the need or ignorance of another. Other kinds of injustice to anyone in respect of his property are : making him lose unjustly what is his, doing him injury in his possessions, not working as one ought, maliciously withholding payment of debts or commercial obligations, striking or killing any of his animals, dissipating what is held in trust for him, interfering with his obtaining any just gain, abetting thieves by receiving, concealing or selling stolen goods.

Stealing is a grave sin against justice, when any serious matter is involved, for it is of much importance to respect the right of the owner to his property, and this is for the good of individuals, of families and of society.

The matter is grave when something considerable is taken, or even when something of little worth, if it occasions serious loss to the owner.

The seventh commandment orders us to respect other people's property, to give fair pay to workmen, and to observe what is just in all that concerns the belongings of others.

If anyone commits a sin against the seventh commandment, it is not enough to confess the sin, but it is necessary to do what is possible to restore what has been stolen, and to make good the loss. The making good of the loss is the compensation which must be given to the owner of the goods or gains lost through the theft or other injustice committed to his disadvantage. This compensation must be made either to the owner or to his

heirs. If he be dead, and if this be really impossible, the value must be given to the poor or made up by pious works.

Supposing something of considerable value is found, the finder is bound to use the utmost diligence to find the owner, and to give it back to him.

5.—THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT

“Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour”

This commandment forbids bearing false witness in court, and also detraction, or murmuring, calumny, flattery, rash judgements and suspicions, and every sort of falsehood.

The sin of detraction or grumbling consists in revealing without just reason the faults and shortcomings of others. Calumny is the malicious attribution to anyone of shortcomings of which he is innocent. Flattery is deceiving a person by speaking well of him or of others insincerely, with the object of taking some advantage of him. The sin of false judgement or suspicion consists in judging or suspecting ill of others without just reason. Lastly, lying is affirming as true or false, by word or by deed, something which one does not believe to be so. And these lies may be of three kinds: jocose, polite, or injurious; the first being uttered by way of a joke, and without being prejudicial to anybody; the second being made use of as being serviceable to oneself or others, without meaning or doing harm to anyone else; and the last being the affirmation of what is false to the detriment of anyone.

Is it, then, ever permissible to tell a lie? No, not even in jest, or to render service to oneself or

to others, because a lie is, in itself, a bad thing. When, however, a lie is uttered in jest or from politeness, or to oblige, it is a venial sin ; but when it does harm, it is a mortal sin, if the harm done be serious. It is not, however, necessary to say all that one thinks, especially if the questions asked have been put by someone who has no right to know what he is enquiring about.

When a sin has been committed against this commandment, it is not enough to confess it, but one is bound also to retract anything calumnious which one has said against one's neighbour, and to repair, as well as one can, the harm done to him.

Finally, the eighth commandment bids us to speak the truth in season, and, as far as possible, to put a good interpretation on the actions of others.

6.—THE TENTH COMMANDMENT

“ Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods ”

This commandment forbids desiring to deprive other people of their goods, or wishing to acquire them by unjust means.

God forbids unruly desires of other people's property, because He wishes us to be just even in thought, and to keep unjust acts at as great a distance from ourselves as possible.

The tenth commandment orders us to be content with the state in which God has placed us, and to bear poverty with patience, when He desires us to live in that condition. Even in poverty a Christian may be content, by reflecting that the greatest good of all is a pure and quiet conscience, that his true country is heaven, and that Jesus Christ

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made Himself poor for our sakes, and has promised a special reward to all who endure poverty with patience.

IV.—Of the Precepts of the Church

I.—THE PRECEPTS OF THE CHURCH IN GENERAL

It is our duty not only to keep God's commandments, but we should also observe the precepts of the Church, because Jesus Christ Himself has bidden us obey the Church, and because the precepts of the Church help us to keep the commandments of God.

The obligation of obeying the precepts of the Church usually begins with the use of reason ; and it is a mortal sin to transgress one of them knowingly in a grave matter.

The Pope alone (or he who has received authority thereto from the Pope) can dispense from obedience to a precept of the Church.

The precepts of the Church are five in number :

1. To hear Mass every Sunday and on other feasts of obligation.

2. To fast during Lent, at the Ember seasons and on the vigils ordered, and not to eat meat on the forbidden days.

3. To go to confession at least once a year, and to receive communion in the parish church at any rate at Easter.

4. To pay the tithe due to the Church according to custom.

5. Not to be married during the forbidden times, *i.e.*, from Advent to Epiphany, and from the first day of Lent to the end of the Octave of Easter.

2.—THE FIRST PRECEPT OF THE CHURCH

This precept bids us assist at Holy Mass with devotion on all Sundays and on other prescribed feasts of obligation.

The Mass which the Church wishes us, if possible, to attend, is the Mass of our own parish, because: 1. Thus all who belong to the same parish are united together with their parish priest as their head to offer prayer. 2. In this way parishioners participate more effectually in the holy sacrifice which is chiefly offered on their behalf. 3. That they may hear the truth of the Gospel, which parish priests are bound to explain at holy Mass. 4. That they may come to know the obligations and notices which are published at this Mass.

Sunday, the Lord's Day, a day specially set apart for divine service, is specially mentioned in the first commandment, because it is the principal feast among Christians, as the Sabbath was the principal feast among the Jews, instituted by God Himself.

The Church has also instituted feasts of Our Lord, of the most holy Virgin, and of Angels and Saints: 1. In order that we may bear in mind the divine mysteries of Our Lord. 2. That we remember the graces and mercies that God has granted to His Angels and Saints, and thank Him for His goodness therein. 3. That we may honour the Angels and the Saints, and imitate their examples, and obtain the assistance of their prayers.

3.—THE SECOND PRECEPT OF THE CHURCH

The second precept bids us keep the fast: 1. In Lent. 2. On certain days of Advent, where they

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are prescribed. 3. At the Four Seasons or Ember Days. 4. On certain Vigils.

Fasting consists in taking only one meal a day, and in abstaining from forbidden foods. Through the condescension of the Church, however, on fast-days a collation is allowed at the evening meal.

The object of fasting is to dispose us better to pray, to do penance for past sins, and to prevent the commission of fresh sins.

All Christians are bound to fast, if they are twenty-one years of age, and have not been dispensed, or are not excused by some lawful impediment; but those who are not bound to fast are not exempt from mortification, because all are bound to penance.

Lent was instituted in order to imitate to some extent the strict fast of forty days, which Jesus Christ went through in the wilderness, and to prepare us by penance to keep Easter holily. The Advent fast is meant to prepare us to keep the feast of Christmas in the same way; and the Ember fasts are intended to give a consecration to every season of the year by some days of penance, to ask God to guard the fruits of the earth and to thank Him for those which He has already given, and to beg Him to give His Church good ministers, as their ordination takes place on the Saturdays of the Four Seasons. The fasts on Vigils are prescribed to prepare us for the holy celebration of the principal feasts.

On Friday and on Saturday, if not dispensed, we are forbidden to eat meat except in case of necessity. This is to enable us to do penance every week, especially on Friday in honour of the Passion, and on Saturday in memory of the burial of Jesus Christ, and in honour of our Blessed Lady

4.—THE THIRD PRECEPT OF THE CHURCH

By this precept the Church binds all Christians who have attained the use of reason to *approach the sacrament of Penance at least once a year*. The most opportune season for putting the precept into practice is during Lent, according to the custom which has been approved by the Church ; but if the Church bids us come "*at least*" once, it is because she wishes us to come several times to the holy sacraments.

It is, indeed, most profitable to make frequent confessions, and, more particularly, because it is a difficult thing to make a good confession and to abstain from mortal sin, if anyone goes to confession rarely.

This precept also bids every Christian who has come to years of discretion to *receive the most holy Eucharist at least once a year during Paschal time*. We are further bound to receive Communion when in danger of death ; and the words "*at least*" are applied to the yearly Communion of Easter, because the Church earnestly desires that we should receive Holy Communion as frequently as possible, since it is the divine nourishment of our souls.

Finally, the third precept of the Church is not fulfilled by a sacrilegious confession and communion, because the Church intends us to receive these sacraments for the purpose for which they were instituted, that is to say, for our sanctification.

5.—THE FOURTH PRECEPT OF THE CHURCH

To keep this precept it is necessary to make the gifts or pay the dues which are established for the purpose of acknowledging the supreme dominion of God over all things, and of assuring the honour-

able maintenance of His ministers. And therefore tithes should be paid in accordance with the customs of particular localities.

6.—THE FIFTH PRECEPT OF THE CHURCH

This precept does not in any way restrict the celebration of the sacrament of marriage, but only the *solemn* celebration of the nuptials from the first Sunday in Advent till the Epiphany, and from the first day of Lent till the end of the Easter octave. A *solemn* celebration means the special Mass for the newly married pair, the nuptial benediction, and extraordinary wedding ceremonies. Such solemn ceremonies and festivities are not suitable in Advent and Lent, because these seasons are specially set apart for penitence and prayer.

V.—OF the Duties of our State of Life, and of the Evangelical Counsels

I.—THE DUTIES OF OUR STATE OF LIFE

THESE duties comprise the obligations implied by our own particular line of life, and by the conditions of the calling which we have to follow.

God Himself it is who has assigned to each state of life its own special duties, because these are derived from His commandments. To take an example : in the name of father or mother are included all our superiors, and therefore from the fourth commandment are derived all the duties of obedience, love and respect of inferiors towards their superiors, and all the duties of vigilance due from superiors with regard to their inferiors. In

the same way, we may deduce the duties of faithfulness, sincerity, justice and equity, of artizans, merchants, and stewards of other people's property, and the like, from the seventh, eighth, and tenth commandments, which forbid cheating, dishonesty, carelessness and duplicity: and the duties of persons devoted to the service of God are derived from the second commandment, which orders them to fulfil their vows and promises made to God, such people being bound in every way to keep all or some of the evangelical counsels.

2.—THE EVANGELICAL COUNSELS

These counsels are means suggested by Jesus Christ in the Holy Gospels for the attainment of Christian perfection. They are voluntary poverty, perpetual chastity, and obedience in everything which is not sin. They are a help to the observance of the commandments and to the better attainment of eternal salvation, because they assist us in setting our hearts free from the love of other people's goods, from pleasure and from honours, and thus they remove us from sin.

PART IV

The Sacraments

I.—The Sacraments in General

1.—THE NATURE OF THE SACRAMENTS

A SACRAMENT is an outward and efficacious sign of grace, instituted by Jesus Christ for the sanctification of our souls : and every sacrament signifies by means of outward things the divine grace which it effects in the soul.

Thus, in Baptism, the pouring of water on a person's head, and the words : "*I baptise thee (i.e., I wash thee) in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,*" are an outward sign of what Baptism effects in the soul : because as the water washes the body, so does the grace conferred by Baptism cleanse the soul from sin.

There are seven sacraments, *i.e.*, Baptism, Penance, Chrism or Confirmation, the Eucharist, Extreme Unction, Holy Order, and Matrimony.

To make a sacrament three things are needed : the matter, the form, and the minister, who must have the intention of doing what the Church does.

The matter is the outward thing used in order to celebrate a sacrament, as, for instance, the water in Baptism, or the oil and balsam in Chrism or Confirmation : the form consists of the words employed, and the minister is the person who performs or celebrates the sacrament.

2.—THE PRINCIPAL EFFECT OF THE SACRAMENTS, WHICH IS GRACE

Grace is an inward and supernatural gift of God, and it is given without any merit of our own, but through the merits of Jesus Christ, in order to eternal life.

Grace is of three kinds, *sanctifying*, *habitual*, and *actual* grace.

Sanctifying grace is a supernatural gift, inhering in the soul and making it just, an adopted child of God and an inheritor of Paradise. Further, it is of two kinds, *first* and *second*. First grace is that by which a man passes from the state of mortal sin to the state of being just. Second grace is an increase of first grace.

Actual grace is a supernatural gift, which enlightens the mind and moves and fortifies the will, so that we may do what is right and avoid what is wrong.

We can, indeed, guiltily resist the grace of God, because it does not destroy our free will, without which we could get no merit from good or demerit from what is ill.

Moreover, without the aid of the grace of God, by our own strength we cannot do anything which would help us to attain eternal life.

Grace is given us by God principally by means of the sacraments, and these sacraments, in addition to sanctifying grace, confer sacramental grace.

Sacramental grace consists in the power, which is obtained by receiving any sacrament, of getting the actual graces necessary for fulfilling the obligations implied by the sacrament which has been received. Thus, Baptism conveys the power of securing graces to lead a Christian life.

Grace is always given by the sacraments, provided that they are received with the proper dispositions, and this power of conferring grace is imparted to them by Jesus Christ through His life and death.

The sacraments which confer the first grace of sanctification, which makes us the friends of God, are two in number, Baptism and Penance, and they are called *sacraments of the dead*, because they were mainly instituted in order to restore the life of grace to souls dead through sin.

The sacraments, which increase grace in those who possess it, are the remaining five : Chrism or Confirmation, the Eucharist, Extreme Unction, Holy Order, and Matrimony, which confer second grace ; and these sacraments are called *sacraments of the living*, because those who receive them must be free from mortal sin, *i.e.*, already living in sanctifying grace.

Whoever receives one of the sacraments of the living, knowing that he is not in the grace of God, commits a grave sacrilege.

The sacraments most necessary for salvation are two: Baptism and Penance ; Baptism being necessary for all, and Penance for all who have sinned mortally since Baptism.

The greatest of all the sacraments is that of the holy Eucharist, because it not only contains grace, but also Jesus Christ Himself, the Author and Giver of the grace of the sacraments.

3.—THE CHARACTERS IMPRESSED BY SOME OF THE SACRAMENTS

There are three sacraments, Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Order, which can be received once only, because each of them imparts a character.

The *character*, impressed by each of these three sacraments on the soul, is a spiritual mark that can never be obliterated. In Baptism the soul is marked as a member of Christ; in Confirmation, as His soldier; in Holy Order, as His minister.

II.—Baptism

I.—THE NATURE AND EFFECTS OF BAPTISM

BAPTISM is the sacrament by which we are born again to the grace of God and become Christians. It confers the first sanctifying grace by which original sin is cancelled, and actual sin also, if there is any: it remits all the penalty due to it, impresses the character of being Christians, makes us children of God, members of Christ and heirs of heaven, and capable of receiving the other sacraments.

The matter of Baptism is common water, which is poured on the head of the person baptized in sufficient quantity to flow.

The form of Baptism is this: *I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*

2.—THE MINISTER OF BAPTISM

The giving of Baptism belongs by right to Bishops and Parish Priests, who may delegate any priest to do it, but, in case of necessity, any person may give it, either man or woman, whether heretic or unbeliever, provided that he follows the rite of Baptism and has the intention of doing what the Church does.

If it be necessary to baptize anyone in danger of death, and if several people are present, the

priest should baptize him, if there is one ; and, in his absence, any ecclesiastic of inferior rank, or, if none such be available, a man rather than a woman, unless the greater skill or fitness of the woman require otherwise. And, whoever baptizes, must have the intention of doing what the Church does in baptizing.

3.—THE RITE OF BAPTISM, AND THE DISPOSITIONS REQUIRED IN AN ADULT FOR ITS RECEPTION

Baptism is given by pouring water on the head of the person who is baptized, or, if it cannot be poured upon the head, then on some other principal part of the body, saying at the same time, " I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

If one person were to pour the water, and another were to utter the words, the person would not be baptized ; but it is necessary for the same person to pour the water and to utter the words.

If there be a doubt as to whether the person be dead, he should be baptized conditionally, saying : " If thou art alive, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

Children should be taken to church to be baptized as soon as possible. It is of the utmost concern that babies should be baptized, because through their tender age they are exposed to so many fatal dangers, and they cannot be saved without Baptism. And therefore, fathers and mothers who, by their own negligence, allow their children to die unbaptized, commit grave sin, because they deprive their children of eternal life ; and it is also a grave sin to defer Baptism for a long time, be-

cause they expose them to the danger of dying without having received it.

If an adult is baptized, he must have contrition, at least imperfect, for the mortal sins he has committed. If he be baptized in mortal sin without such sorrow, he would receive the character of Baptism, but not its sanctifying grace. And its effects would remain suspended until the impediment was removed by sorrow for his sins.

4.—THE NECESSITY OF BAPTISM AND THE DUTIES OF THE BAPTIZED

Baptism is absolutely necessary to salvation, since our Lord says expressly: "*Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.*"

Martyrdom can take the place of Baptism, and it is called *the Baptism of blood*; or an act of perfect love of God or of contrition, if it is united with a desire, at least implicit, of Baptism, and this is called *the Baptism of desire*.

He who receives Baptism is bound ever to profess the Faith and to keep the laws of Jesus Christ and of His Church. He must also renounce for ever the devil and all his works and pomps.

By the pomps of the devil are meant sins and the maxims of the world which are opposed to the maxims of the Gospel.

5.—NAMES AND GODPARENTS

The name of a Saint is given to a person who is baptized, to put him under the protection of a celestial patron, and to arouse him to imitate his example.

At a Baptism the godparents are those who, according to the rules of the Church, hold the

babies at the sacred font, answer in their stead, and make themselves responsible before God for their Christian education, especially if they have no parents. But we are certainly bound to hold to the promises and renunciations that our godparents have made on our behalf, because God has only received us into His grace on those conditions.

The choice of godparents must be from persons who are Catholics of good character, and who obey the laws of the Church. They must see that their spiritual children are instructed in the truths of the Faith, and live as good Christians, edifying them by good example.

Godparents contract a spiritual relationship with the person baptized and his parents, and this makes an impediment to marriage with them.

III.—Confirmation

CONFIRMATION is a sacrament which gives the Holy Ghost, impresses on the soul the character of being a soldier of Jesus Christ, and makes us fully Christians, because it confirms us in the Faith, and perfects the other virtues and gifts that we have received in holy Baptism, and this is why it is called *Confirmation*.

The gifts of the Holy Ghost received in Confirmation are these seven: Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Fortitude, Knowledge, Piety, and the Fear of the Lord.

The matter of this sacrament, in addition to the laying on of hands of the Bishop, is the anointing of the forehead of the baptized with the holy chrism; and therefore it is called *Chrism*, that is to say, *Anointing*.

The holy chrism is oil mixed with balsam, which has been consecrated by the Bishop on Holy Thursday. The spreading strengthening oil signifies the abundance of grace, which is sprinkled in the soul of the Christian to confirm him in the Faith ; and the balsam, which is sweet-smelling and keeps from corruption, signifies that the Christian, when strengthened by this grace, is fitted to produce the sweet savour of Christian virtues and to be kept from the corruption of vice.

The form of the sacrament of Confirmation is this : *I sign thee with the sign of the Cross, I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*

The Bishop only is the ordinary minister of this sacrament. He first stretches out his hands over those who are to be confirmed, invoking the Holy Ghost upon them ; then he anoints each one on the forehead with the holy chrism in the form of a cross, using the words of the form ; then with his right hand he gives a little blow on the face of the person who has been anointed, saying : *Peace be with you ;* and lastly, he blesses all who have been anointed.

The anointing is done on the forehead, where appear the signs of fear and shame, that the confirmed person may understand that he must not be ashamed of the name or profession of a Christian, or have any fear of the enemies of the Faith. The little blow is to teach him that he must be ready to endure any humiliation or suffering for the faith of Jesus Christ.

It is the duty of all to try to receive the sacrament of Confirmation, and to have it administered to their dependents. The right age for its reception is about the seventh year, because that is the

time when temptations are wont to begin, and the grace of the sacrament can then be sufficiently understood and its reception remembered.

To receive Confirmation worthily, it is necessary to be in the grace of God, to know the chief mysteries of our Holy Faith, and to approach it with reverence and devotion. It would be a sacrilege to receive it a second time, because Confirmation is one of the sacraments which impress a character on the soul, and therefore it can be received once only.

In order to keep the grace of Confirmation, the Christian must pray often, do good works, and live according to the laws of Jesus Christ, without human respect.

Sponsors are appointed to direct the person confirmed by word and example in the way of salvation, and to help him in his spiritual warfare. They must be of suitable age, Catholics, confirmed, instructed in the most necessary truths of religion and of good morals. They contract the same spiritual relationship with the person confirmed and his parents as do the godparents at Baptism.

IV.—The Holy Eucharist

I.—THE NATURE OF THE SACRAMENT ; AND THE REAL PRESENCE OF JESUS CHRIST IN THE SAME

THE EUCHARIST is a sacrament which, through the wonderful conversion of all the substance of the bread into the Body of Jesus Christ, and of that of the wine into His precious Blood, contains truly, really and substantially, the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of the same Jesus Christ our Lord,

under the species of bread and wine, to be our spiritual food.

In the Eucharist there is truly the same Jesus Christ who is in heaven, and who was born on earth of the most holy Virgin. We believe that He is really present in the sacrament of the Eucharist because He has Himself said so, and because the Church teaches us this.

The matter of the sacrament is that made use of by Jesus Christ, that is to say, bread and wine.

The form of the sacrament consists of the words used by Jesus Christ : *this is My Body ; this is My Blood.*

The host, before the consecration, is bread ; but, after the consecration, it is the true Body of our Lord Jesus Christ under the species of bread. And before the consecration, there are in the chalice wine and a few drops of water ; but afterwards, it contains the true Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the species of wine.

The conversion of the bread into the Body and of the wine into the Blood of Jesus Christ takes place in the very act in which the priest, in Holy Mass, pronounces the words of consecration.

The consecration is the repetition, by the priest's agency, of the miracle wrought by Jesus Christ, at the last supper, in changing the bread and wine into His adorable Body and Blood, when He said : *This is My Body, this is My Blood.* This miraculous *conversion* of the bread and the wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, which takes place daily on our altars, is called by the Church *transubstantiation*.

This great power has been imparted to the words of consecration by our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, who is Almighty God.

After the consecration, there remain only the species of bread and wine. The species, or appearances, are the sensible quantities and qualities of the bread and wine, such as their form, colour and taste. The species of the bread and wine remain miraculously apart from their substance by the power of Almighty God. Both under the species of the bread and under the species of the wine, there is the whole living Jesus Christ, in Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity. Both in the host and in the chalice, there is the whole Jesus Christ, because in the Eucharist He is living and immortal as in heaven; because where His Body is, there are also His Blood, Soul and Divinity, and where His Blood is, there, too, are His Body, Soul and Divinity, all these being inseparable in Jesus Christ. And when Jesus is in the host, He does not cease to be in heaven, but He is at the same time in heaven and in the Holy Sacrament. He is, too, in all the consecrated hosts, through the omnipotence of God, to whom all things are possible.

When the host is broken, the Body of Christ is unbroken, but only the species of the bread; and the Body of Christ remains entire in all the parts into which the host has been divided. Just as He is in a large host, so is the same Jesus Christ in any particle of a host.

The Holy Eucharist is kept in churches to be adored by the faithful, to be received by those who cannot communicate at the Sacrifice of the Mass, and to be carried to the sick in case of need.

The Holy Eucharist ought to be adored by all, because it contains really, truly and substantially, our Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

2.—THE INSTITUTION AND THE EFFECTS OF THE SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST

Jesus Christ instituted the sacrament of the Eucharist at the Last Supper, which He took with His disciples the night before His passion.

He instituted it for three reasons in chief :

1. To be the sacrifice of the new law :
2. To be the food of our souls :
3. To be a perpetual memorial of His passion and death, and a precious token of His love towards us, and of life eternal.

It was instituted under the species of bread and wine, because the Eucharist ought to be our spiritual food, and it was therefore fitting that it should be given in the form of food and drink.

The following are the principal effects that the most Holy Eucharist produces in those who receive it worthily :

1. It preserves and increases the life of the soul which is grace, just as material food sustains and increases the life of the body :
2. It remits venial sins and preserves us from mortal sins :
3. It imparts spiritual consolation :
4. It weakens our passions, and especially deadens in us the flames of concupiscence :
5. It increases in us the fervour of charity towards God and our neighbour, and helps us to act in accordance with the desires of Jesus Christ :
6. It gives us a pledge of future glory and of the resurrection of the body.

3.—THE NECESSARY DISPOSITIONS FOR A GOOD COMMUNION

The sacrament of the Holy Eucharist produces its marvellous effects in us when it is received with the proper dispositions.

To make a good Communion three things are necessary :

1. To be in the grace of God :
2. To be fasting from midnight up till the time of Communion :
3. To know what it is we are about to receive, and to approach Holy Communion with devotion.

To be *in the grace of God* is to have a conscience pure and clean from all mortal sin. And he who knows that he is in mortal sin, before communicating, must make a good confession ; since an act of perfect contrition is not enough without confession, if anyone is in mortal sin, for communicating properly. It is out of respect for this sacrament that the Church has laid it down, that whoever is guilty of mortal sin shall not dare to make his Communion, unless he has first made his confession. Therefore he who communicates in mortal sin, receives Jesus Christ, but not His grace, and also commits sacrilege, and renders himself liable to a sentence of damnation.

Before Communion *fasting* is required, and this is broken by taking any little thing by way of food or drink. But if anything remaining in the teeth, or a few drops of water in washing, were swallowed, a person may still communicate, because then such matters would not be taken by way of food or drink, and would have already have lost the nature of being anything of the kind. To make one's Communion without fasting is allowed to the sick who are in danger of death, and to those who have obtained a special dispensation from the Pope by reason of prolonged sickness. The Communion made by the sick, when in danger of death, is called the *Viaticum*, because

it sustains them in the journey they have to make from this life into eternity.

To know what it is we are about to receive means to know what is taught about the sacrament by Christian Doctrine, and to believe it firmly. *To communicate with devotion* means to approach Holy Communion with humility and modesty, both in person and dress ; and to make a preparation before and to give thanks after Holy Communion. The preparation before Holy Communion consists in spending some time in considering whom we are going to receive and who we ourselves are ; and in making acts of faith, hope and charity, contrition, adoration, humility and desire of receiving Jesus Christ. The thanksgiving after communion consists in keeping recollected to honour our Lord within us : in renewing the acts of faith, hope, charity, adoration, thanksgiving, offering, and in asking especially for those graces which are most necessary for us and for those for whom we are bound to pray.

On the day of Communion we ought to remain as recollected as possible, to occupy ourselves in works of piety, and to fulfil the duties of our state of life with greater diligence. After Holy Communion, Jesus Christ remains within us by His grace so long as we do not sin mortally, and He abides in us with His real presence as long as the sacramental species are not consumed.

4.—HOW TO COMMUNICATE

In the act of receiving Holy Communion we must kneel down, hold the head fairly up, with eyes cast down and fixed upon the sacred particle, the mouth sufficiently open and the tongue slightly thrust forward and resting on the lower lip. The

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Communion cloth or tablet should be held in such a way as to catch any sacred particle that may happen to fall, and the latter should be swallowed as soon as possible, and for some time spitting should be avoided. If, however, the sacred particle should adhere to the palate, it should be detached with the tongue and not with the finger.

5.—THE PRECEPT OF HOLY COMMUNION

There is an obligation to communicate every year at Paschal Time, each one in his own parish ; and also, when in danger of death.

The obligation to Easter Communion begins to bind at the age in which a child is capable of approaching it with the due dispositions. And those whose age fits them for being admitted to Holy Communion, and who do not communicate, either because they will not, or because they have not been instructed owing to their own fault, certainly sin. Their parents, or those who are in their stead, also sin, if the deferring of Holy Communion is due to their fault, and they will have to give a serious account of it to God.

It is best to communicate frequently, and even daily, according to the desire of the Church, provided that it is done with the proper dispositions. And each person may go to Communion with such frequency as is advised by a pious and learned confessor.

V.—The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass

I.—THE ESSENCE, THE INSTITUTION, AND THE ENDS OF THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS

THE Eucharist, besides being a sacrament, is also a permanent sacrifice of the new law, and was

left by Jesus Christ to His Church to be offered to God by the hands of His priests.

A sacrifice generally consists in offering something sensible to God, and in destroying it in such a way as to acknowledge His supreme dominion over us and all things.

This sacrifice under the new law is called Holy Mass, which is the sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, offered on our altars under the species of bread and wine, in memory of the sacrifice of the Cross.

The sacrifice of the Mass is substantially that of the Cross, in as far as the same Jesus Christ, who offered Himself on the Cross, is He who offers Himself by the hands of the priests, His ministers, on our altars ; but as to the manner of its offering, the sacrifice of the Mass differs from the sacrifice of the Cross, only retaining the most intimate and essential connection with the latter. The difference and connection between them is this : that on the Cross Jesus Christ offered Himself by shedding His blood and by meriting for us ; while on the altars He sacrifices Himself without shedding His blood, and applies to us the fruits of His Passion and Death. Another connection of the sacrifice of the Mass with that of the Cross is that the former represents the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ in a sensible manner ; because in virtue of the words of consecration there becomes present under the species of the wine the Blood only of our Saviour ; although through natural concomitance and the hypostatic union, the living and true Jesus Christ is present under each of the species.

The sacrifice of the Cross is the one sacrifice of the new law, in so far as through it the Lord

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appeased the Divine Justice, acquired all the merits necessary for our salvation, and thus fulfilled His part in our redemption. These merits, however, He applies to us by the means which He has instituted in His Church, amongst which is the holy sacrifice of the Mass.

The sacrifice of Holy Mass is offered to God for four ends :

1. To honour Him in a fitting manner, and hence it is called *latreutic*.

2. To thank Him for His benefits, and hence it is called *eucharistic*.

3. To appease Him, by giving Him the satisfaction due for our sins, and by way of suffrage for the souls of purgatory, and hence it is called *propitiatory*.

4. To obtain all necessary graces, and hence it is called *impetratory*.

The first and chief offerer of the sacrifice of Holy Mass is Jesus Christ, and the priest is the minister who, in the name of Jesus Christ, offers the same sacrifice to the Eternal Father.

The sacrifice of Holy Mass was instituted by Jesus Christ Himself when He instituted the sacrifice of the Eucharist, and ordained that it should be done as a memorial of His Passion.

Holy Mass is offered to God alone ; and even when celebrated in honour of the Blessed Virgin and of the Saints, it is always a sacrifice offered to God only ; and, therefore, it is said to be celebrated in honour of the Blessed Virgin and of the Saints to thank God for the gifts that He has bestowed upon them, and to obtain from Him through their intercession more abundantly those graces that we need.

The whole Church participates in the benefits of the Mass, but particularly :

1. The priest, and those who are present at the Mass, who consider themselves united to the priest.
2. Those to whom the Mass is applied, who may be living or dead.

2.—HOW TO ASSIST AT HOLY MASS

To hear Holy Mass well and fruitfully two things are necessary : 1. Modesty of person.
2. Devotion of heart.

Modesty in person consists in being modestly dressed, in being silent and recollected, and in remaining on one's knees as much as possible, except during the two Gospels, which are heard standing.

The best way to practise devotion of heart is the following :

1. To begin by uniting one's own intention to that of the priest, offering the holy sacrifice to God for the ends for which it was instituted.
2. To accompany the priest in every prayer and act of the sacrifice.
3. To meditate on the passion and death of Jesus Christ, and to detest from the heart the sins which were the cause of it.
4. To make Communion sacramentally, or at least spiritually, when the priest communicates.

Spiritual Communion means a great desire of being united sacramentally with Jesus Christ, saying for instance : " My Lord Jesus Christ, I desire with all my heart to unite with Thee now and through all eternity " ; and making the same acts as are made before and after sacramental Communion.

The recitation of the Rosary and other prayers during Mass do not hinder the hearing of it fruitfully, provided that care is taken as far as possible to follow the action of the holy sacrifice.

It is a good thing to pray for others in assisting at Holy Mass; and, moreover, the time of Holy Mass is the most opportune for praying to God for the living and the dead.

When Mass is over, we should thank God for the grace of having been enabled to be present at this great sacrifice, and ask His pardon for all the shortcomings we may have committed while assisting at it.

VI.—Penance

I.—PENANCE IN GENERAL

PENANCE, which is also called Confession, is the sacrament instituted by Jesus Christ for the remission of sins committed after Baptism.

This sacrament is called Penance, because, in order to obtain pardon for sins it is necessary to detest them with penitence, and because he who has committed a fault ought to submit to the penalty imposed by the priest.

It is also called Confession, because to obtain pardon for sins, it is not enough to detest them, but it is necessary to accuse one's self of them to the priest, and this is to make a confession of them.

Jesus Christ instituted the sacrament of Penance on the day of His resurrection, on which He entered into the cenacle and solemnly gave His Apostles the power to remit sins. This power He committed to them by breathing upon them and

saying, "*Receive ye the Holy Ghost : whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them : and whose sins you shall retain they are retained.*"

The matter of the sacrament of Penance is distinguished as either remote or proximate. The remote matter consists in the sins committed by the penitent after Baptism, and the proximate matter, of the acts of the penitent himself, *i.e.*, of contrition, self-accusation and satisfaction.

The form of the sacrament of Penance consists of the words, "I absolve thee from thy sins."

The minister of the sacrament is the priest approved and authorised to hear confessions by the Bishop. The reason of this requirement is that it is not enough to have been ordained to be able to administer this sacrament in a valid manner, but jurisdiction is also necessary, *i.e.*, the power to judge which must be given by the Bishop.

The parts which make up the sacrament of Penance are the contrition, confession and satisfaction of the penitent, and the absolution of the priest.

Contrition or sorrow for sins is a mental displeasure whereby we detest the sins we have committed, and purpose not to commit them any more in the future.

Contrition means a breaking or dashing to pieces, as when a stone is ground and reduced to powder ; and sorrow for sins is called contrition to signify that the hard heart of the sinner is in a certain way broken by sorrow for having offended God.

Confession consists in a definite self-accusation of the sins we have committed to the confessor in order to obtain absolution for them and penance.

Confession, moreover, is called a self-accusation, because it must not be a careless narration, but a true and sorrowful revelation of our sins.

Satisfaction or penance is the prayer or other good work which the confessor enjoins on the penitent for the expiation of his sins.

Absolution is the sentence which the priest pronounces in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission to the penitent of his sins.

Of all the parts of the sacrament of Penance contrition is the most necessary, because without it the pardon of sins can never be obtained, and with it alone, if it be perfect, pardon may be obtained, provided that it be accompanied with the desire, at least an implicit desire, of making a confession.

2.—THE EFFECTS AND THE NECESSITY OF THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE, AND THE DISPOSITIONS REQUIRED FOR RECEIVING IT WELL

These are the effects of the sacrament of Penance. It confers sanctifying grace whereby mortal sins are forgiven, and also venial sins which are confessed and for which there is sorrow ; it commutes the eternal penalty into a temporal one, which is, however, more or less remitted according to one's dispositions ; it restores the merits of good works done before the mortal sin was committed, and it gives to the soul opportune help to keep it from falling into the sin again, and renews peace of conscience.

Penance is necessary for the salvation of all who after Baptism commit any mortal sin.

Frequent confession is an excellent thing, because the sacrament of Penance, besides cancelling sins, gives the grace required to avoid

them in the future. Moreover, it has the virtue of remitting all sins however great or many they may be, provided that it be received with the proper dispositions.

For a good confession five things are required :

1. Examination of conscience.
2. Sorrow for having offended God.
3. Firm purpose not to sin any more.
4. Self-accusation of one's sins.
5. Satisfaction or penance.

To make a good confession we should begin by praying the Lord with all our hearts to give us light to know all our sins and the power of detesting them.

3.—SELF-EXAMINATION

Examination of conscience is a diligent search for sins committed since the last good confession.

To examine one's conscience one must recall diligently to one's memory before God all the sins one has committed, but not confessed, in thought, word or deed, or by omission, against the commandments of God and of the Church, and the obligations of one's proper state. We must also examine ourselves as to our evil habits, and as to the occasions of sin. We must also try to find out the number of times we have sinned mortally.

For a sin to be mortal three things are necessary : grave matter, full consciousness, and a perfect consent of the will.

The matter is grave when something notably contrary to the laws of God and of the Church is involved.

There is full consciousness of sinning when any one is perfectly aware that he is doing a grave wrong.

In sinning there is perfect consent of the will

when anything is done deliberately, although it is known to be sinful.

In examination of conscience the same diligence should be used as would be used in any matter of great importance.

More or less time should be taken according as may be required, *i.e.*, according to the number and character of the sins which burden the conscience, and according to the time which has elapsed since the last good confession.

The examination of conscience is facilitated if an examination of conscience be made every evening on the actions of the day.

4.—SORROW

Sorrow for sins consists in displeasure and in sincere detestation of offences against God.

Sorrow is of two kinds: perfect, or contrition; and imperfect, or attrition.

Perfect sorrow is displeasure at having offended God, because He is infinitely good and worthy in Himself of being loved. The sorrow of contrition is called perfect for two reasons: 1. because it regards only the goodness of God and not our own advantage or loss; 2. because it enables us to obtain pardon at once for our sins, though the duty of confessing them remains. Perfect sorrow cannot secure the pardon of sins independently of confession, because it always includes the desire of confessing. Contrition restores us to the grace of God, because it springs from charity, which cannot be found in the soul together with mortal sin.

Imperfect sorrow or attrition is that whereby we are sorry for having offended God as our final Judge, *i.e.*, through fear of punishment deserved in this life or the next, or through the very foulness of sin.

Sorrow, in order to be really good, ought to have four characteristics: it should be *inward*, *supernatural*, *extreme* and *universal*.

It must be *inward*, because it must penetrate the heart and will, and not be in word only; for the will which has become estranged from God by sin must return to God by the detestation of sin committed.

When we say that it must be *supernatural*, we mean that it must be excited in us by the grace of Our Lord and conceived from motives of faith; for the end at which it aims is supernatural, *i.e.*, the pardon of God obtained through sanctifying grace and the right to eternal glory. Now this is the difference between natural and supernatural sorrow. Whoever repents for having offended a God who is infinitely good and worthy in Himself of being loved, for having lost paradise and deserved hell, or on account of the essential malignity of sin, he has a supernatural sorrow, because these are motives of faith; but whosoever on the other hand repents only for the dishonour or punishment which may befall him from men, or on account of some purely temporal loss, he would feel a natural sorrow, because he would repent solely from human motives.

Lastly, our sorrow should be *extreme*, because we ought to regard and hate sin as the most extreme of all evils, as being an offence against God, the highest good. It is not necessary that we should shed actual tears for sorrow of our sins; but it suffices to feel in our hearts that it is a greater thing to have offended God than to have suffered any other disgrace.

When we say that sorrow must be *universal*, we mean that it must embrace all the mortal

sins we have committed, for if we are unrepentant even as to one single mortal sin, we are still the enemies of God.

In order to obtain sorrow for our sins we should ask God for it with all our hearts, and stir it up within ourselves by considering the great evil we have done in sinning.

To arouse ourselves to the detestation of sin, let us consider: 1. the rigour of the infinite justice of God, and the deformity of sin which defiles the soul and makes us deserve the eternal pains of hell; 2. that we have lost the grace, friendship, and sonship of God and the inheritance of paradise; 3. that we have offended the Redeemer who died for us, and that our sins were the cause of His death; 4. that we have despised our Creator and our God, and turned our back upon Him who is our highest Good, worthy of being loved above everything and of being faithfully served.

In going to confession we should certainly be most anxious to have real sorrow for our sins, because this is of all things the most important, and if it be wanting the confession will be useless.

If only venial sins have to be confessed, the confession will be valid if some of them be repented of, but to obtain pardon of them all it is necessary to repent of all that can be remembered as having been committed.

Whoever confesses venial sins only and yet does not repent of any of them makes a useless confession which is also sacrilegious, if the want of sorrow be conscious. Therefore to make a confession more sure, when only venial sins have to be confessed, it is prudent to accuse oneself with real sorrow of some graver sin of one's past

life, although it may have already been confessed at some other confession.

It is furthermore a good thing frequently to make an act of contrition, especially before going to sleep or on perceiving or being in doubt as to whether one has fallen into mortal sin, so as to return more quickly to the grace of God. This practice also is a help to make similar acts in cases of greater need, *i.e.*, on the point of death.

5.—FIRM PURPOSE

Firm purpose consists in a resolute act of will never to commit sin any more and to make use of every means of avoiding it.

Purpose in order to be firm requires mainly three conditions: it must be *absolute*, *universal*, and *efficacious*.

By saying that the purpose must be *absolute*, we mean that it must be without conditions as to time, place or person. In saying that it must be *universal*, we mean that it requires us to wish to flee from all mortal sins, both those which we have formerly committed and those which we may be capable of committing. To be *efficacious*, it demands of us a resolute will to lose everything rather than commit a mortal sin, to fly dangerous occasions of sinning, to destroy bad habits, and to fulfil the obligations to which we are liable owing to our sins.

A bad habit is a disposition which has been acquired of falling easily into those sins to which we have become accustomed. To correct it, we must use vigilance and much prayer, practise confession, have a firm director, and carry out the counsels and remedies which he puts before us.

Dangerous occasions of sin comprise all the

circumstances of time, place or person, or of things which, of their own nature or owing to our frailty, lead on to sin.

We are seriously bound to avoid the dangerous occasions which ordinarily lead us to commit mortal sin, and these are called proximate occasions of sin. If we cannot avoid them, we should tell our confessor, and abide by the advice which he gives us.

In order to make a firm purpose we may use the same considerations which were indicated to stimulate sorrow, *i.e.*, consider the motives we have for fearing the justice and for loving the infinite goodness of God.

6.—THE ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF SINS TO THE CONFESSOR

After obtaining a proper disposition by means of self-examination, sorrow for sin and firm purpose, we must go to the confessor to make confession of our sins in order to obtain absolution of them.

We are bound to confess all our mortal sins, and it is well to confess even our venial sins.

The main conditions required in our self-accusation of sins are five in number : it must be *humble*, *entire*, *sincere*, *prudent* and *brief*.

It must be *humble* : it must be made before the confessor without any conceit of thought or word, but with the feelings of a guilty person who recognises his guilt and appears before the judge.

It must be *entire* : it must reveal all the mortal sins that have been committed since the last good confession, and that are known to one in their circumstances and number. Those circumstances must be revealed which change the nature of the

sin, *e.g.* : 1. Those through which an act is changed from being venial into a mortal sin. 2. Those whereby an act which is sinful combines the malice of two or more mortal sins. Thus a lie, which has wrought grave wrong to a neighbour, must be so avowed in confession as to reveal the circumstances which changed the lie from being formal into being gravely harmful. And so, too, he who steals something sacred should include in his confession the circumstance which adds the malice of sacrilege to that of theft. If anyone is not certain that what he has committed is a sin, he would not be obliged to confess it, but, if he wished to confess it, he should add that he is not certain of having committed a sin. He, too, who does not remember precisely the number of his sins, should accuse himself of an approximate number. If, however, a mortal sin is not confessed owing to mere forgetfulness, or if some essential circumstance be omitted for a similar reason, a good confession will have been made, provided that due diligence has been used in trying to recall it. But if the mortal sin which was forgotten afterwards come to mind, one is certainly bound to accuse oneself of it at the first subsequent confession. Should anyone guiltily conceal any mortal sin in confession through shame or any other motive, he profanes the sacrament and renders himself guilty of very grave sacrilege. He must then reveal to his confessor the mortal sin which he has guiltily concealed, and say during how many confessions he has concealed it, and renew all the past confessions since the last good one. If anyone be tempted to conceal a grave sin in confession he should consider : 1. That he was not ashamed to sin in the presence of God who

sees everything. 2. That it is better to manifest one's own sins in secret to the confessor than to live unhappily in sin, to die a miserable death, and, therefore, to be put to shame on the day of the general judgement before the whole world. 3. That the confessor is bound by the sacramental seal under pain of gravest sin, and by the threat of the most severe penalties, temporal and eternal.

The self-accusation must be *sincere*, i.e., one must declare one's sins just as they are, without excusing them, diminishing, or exaggerating them.

It must also be *prudent*; it must employ in the confession of sin language which is thoroughly modest, and which does not reveal in any way the sins of others.

Finally, it must be *brief*, which means that we must say nothing to the confessor which is not to the point.

Although to confess our own sins to another may be burdensome, it must nevertheless be done, because it is of divine commandment, and, otherwise, pardon for sins committed cannot be obtained, and because, also, the difficulty of confession is compensated by many advantages and by great consolations.

7.—THE WAY TO MAKE A CONFESSION

First kneel down at the feet of the confessor, and say, "Bless, me Father, for I have sinned."

Then humbly bend to receive the blessing and make the sign of the cross, and say, "I confess to God Almighty, to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and to all the Saints, that I have sinned. I made my last confession on ———, and, by God's grace I received absolution, and did my penance, and went to Communion. Since then, I accuse myself of having committed the following

sins . . . and I accuse myself of all the sins committed during my past life, particularly against such and such a virtue—as, for instance, purity, or the fourth commandment . . . and for all these sins and for those which I cannot remember, I beg God's pardon with all my heart ; and from you, my spiritual Father, I beg for penance and absolution."

When the confession is over, what the confessor says should be listened to with respect ; the penance should be accepted with a sincere wish to do it ; and while absolution is being pronounced, an act of contrition should be renewed from the heart.

After absolution has been received, return thanks to God, do the penance as soon as possible, and carry out the advice of the confessor into practice.

8.—ABSOLUTION

Confessors are only bound to give absolution to those whom they judge to be properly disposed to receive it.

Not only are they able, but in some cases they ought, to defer or refuse absolution, so as not to profane the sacrament.

Penitents who must be held to be badly disposed to receive absolution are mainly :

1. Those who are ignorant of the chief mysteries of the faith, or who neglect to learn the other things of Christian Doctrine which they are bound to know according to their state.
2. Those who are seriously negligent in making an examination of conscience, or who give no signs of sorrow and penitence.
3. Those who are unwilling to make use of the

necessary means for the correction of their bad habits.

4. Those who will not forgive their enemies from their hearts.

5. Those who will not restore, when they can, the goods of others, or the good fame of which they have robbed them.

6. Those who will not abandon the proximate occasions of sin.

Nor should the confessor who defers the absolution of the penitent, because he does not regard the latter as properly disposed, be considered too rigorous, but rather most charitable. He conducts himself as a good physician, who tries all the remedies, even those which are disagreeable and painful, to save the life of the sick patient. And therefore, the sinner who is denied absolution or who has to wait for it, should not despair or withdraw altogether from confession, but he should humble himself, and acknowledge his deplorable condition, profit by the good advice given him by the confessor, and thus put himself as soon as possible into a position to deserve absolution.

For the choice of a good confessor a penitent should recommend himself much to God, and then place himself in his hands, and submit to him, as to a judge or physician.

9.—SATISFACTION OR PENANCE

Satisfaction, which is also called sacramental penance, is an act of the penitent whereby he makes a certain reparation to the justice of God for sins committed, in performing the works imposed on him by the confessor.

The penitent is bound to accept the penance imposed on him by the confessor if he can do it, and

if he cannot do it, he should humbly say so to the confessor, and ask for another.

If the confessor does not prescribe a time for doing the penance, it should be performed as soon as possible, and that while the penitent is in a state of grace.

Moreover, the whole of the penance must be done, and that with devotion.

Penance is imposed, because usually, after the remission of guilt and of eternal punishment by means of absolution, a temporary penalty remains to be discharged either in this world or in purgatory.

Furthermore, the Lord has been pleased to remit all the penalty due for sins in the sacrament of Baptism and not in the sacrament of Penance, because sins committed after Baptism are much more grave, since they involve more knowledge and more ingratitude for the blessings of God, and because the obligation of making satisfaction for them is a restraint upon falling back into sin.

Of ourselves we cannot satisfy God, but we can only do so by uniting ourselves to Jesus Christ, so that He may give value to our act by the merit of His passion and death.

The penance imposed by the confessor does not usually suffice to discharge the penalties due to our sins, wherefore it is necessary to supplement it with other voluntary penances.

Works of penance may be reduced to three kinds : prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.

Prayer comprises every kind of exercise of piety. Fasting means every sort of mortification. Almsgiving includes all works of mercy, spiritual and corporal.

The penance imposed by a confessor is more

meritorious than that chosen by ourselves, because, being a part of the sacrament, it receives greater virtue from the merits of the passion of Jesus Christ.

Those who die after having received absolution, but before having fully satisfied the justice of God, do not go directly to paradise, but into purgatory, there to make satisfaction and to be completely purified.

These souls in purgatory we can relieve by prayers, alms and all other good works, by indulgences, and, above all, by the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

After confession, in addition to his penance, a penitent, if he has unjustly wronged his neighbour as to his possessions or honour, or if he has scandalized him, must, as far as possible, and as soon as possible, make restitution of the property or make reparation for his honour, and remedy the offence he has done.

The scandal which he has done may be remedied by causing the occasion of it to cease, and by edifying by word and by good example those who have been scandalized.

When a neighbour has been given offence, satisfaction may be made by begging his pardon, or by making some other suitable reparation.

The following are the fruits of a good confession : 1. It remits sins committed and gives us the grace of God. 2. It restores peace and quietness of conscience. 3. It opens afresh the gates of paradise, and changes the eternal punishment of hell for a temporal penalty. 4. It preserves us from falling again, and makes us entitled to the treasure of indulgences.

10.—INDULGENCES

An indulgence is the remission of the temporal penalty due to our sins, the guilt of which has already been forgiven; and this remission the Church grants apart from the sacrament of Penance.

The power of granting indulgences has been received by the Church from Jesus Christ.

The Church remits for us the temporal punishment by means of indulgences, applying to us the superabundant merits of Jesus Christ, of most holy Mary and of the Saints, which form what is called the treasure of the Church.

The Pope alone in all the Church, and the Bishop in his diocese, according to the faculties given him by the Pope, have the power to grant indulgences.

Indulgences are of two kinds, plenary and partial.

A plenary indulgence is that whereby the whole of the temporal punishment due for our sins is remitted. Therefore, if anyone were to die after having received such an indulgence, he would go straight to paradise quite free from the pains of purgatory.

A partial indulgence is that whereby only a part of the temporal punishment due for our sins is remitted.

In granting indulgences, the Church means to come to help us in our incapacity to expiate in this world all temporal punishment, enabling us to obtain by means of works of piety and charity that which in the early ages could only be procured by the rigour of canonical penances.

By indulgences of forty or of a hundred days, or of seven years or the like, we mean the

remission of so much temporal punishment as would be discharged by a similar period of the penance formerly prescribed by the Church.

We should hold indulgences in very high esteem, because thereby satisfaction is made to the justice of God, and heaven is gained more quickly or more easily.

To obtain indulgences the following things are required: 1. being in a state of grace (at least so far as the last work done was concerned) and freedom from such venial faults as it is desired to cancel the punishment of; 2. the fulfilment of the works prescribed by the Church for obtaining the indulgence; 3. the intention of gaining them.

Indulgences may also be applied to souls in purgatory, when he who grants them declares that they may be so applied.

The Jubilee which is ordinarily granted every twenty-five years is a plenary indulgence to which are attached many privileges and special concessions, such as the power to obtain absolution from certain reserved sins and from censures, and the commutation of certain vows.

VII.—Extreme Unction

EXTREME Unction is a sacrament instituted for the spiritual and even temporal relief of the sick who are in danger of death.

It produces the following effects: 1. it increases sanctifying grace; 2. it cancels venial sins and even mortal sins which the repentant sick person is unable to confess; 3. it removes the feebleness and languor towards the good which remain even after pardon of sin has been obtained; 4. it gives strength to bear illness patiently, to resist all

temptations, and to die a holy death ; 5. it helps to restore health of body, if it be profitable for the salvation of the soul.

The Holy Oil should be administered when the illness is dangerous, and after the sick person has received, if he can, the sacraments of Penance and of the Eucharist ; although it is well to receive it when still of sound mind and with some hope of life. This is because, by receiving it with better dispositions, it may be fruitful, and again, because as this sacrament restores health of the body, if it be expedient for the soul, by helping the forces of nature, we ought not to wait until recovery is despaired of.

The main dispositions required for the reception of Extreme Unction are : being in the grace of God, confidence in the virtue of the sacrament and in the divine mercy, and resignation to the will of the Lord.

On seeing the priest the sick person should feel gratitude to God for having sent him, receive him willingly, and ask, if he can, for the comforts of religion.

VIII.—Holy Order

HOLY ORDER is the sacrament which gives the power of exercising the sacred ministry which concerns the worship of God and the salvation of souls, and which stamps on the soul of him who receives it the character of a minister of God.

It is called Order, because it consists in various degrees, subordinate to one another, whence proceeds the sacred Hierarchy.

The highest of these degrees is the Episcopate, which comprises the fulness of the priesthood ;

then comes the Presbyterate or simple Priesthood; then the Diaconate, the Subdiaconate and the Orders called minor.

Jesus Christ instituted the Sacerdotal Order at the Last Supper, when He conferred upon the Apostles and their successors the power of consecrating the Most Holy Eucharist. The day after His Resurrection He conferred on them also the power of remitting and of retaining sins, making them the first priests of the new law in all the fulness of their power.

The minister of this sacrament is the Bishop.

The dignity of the Christian Priesthood is of the highest owing to the twofold power which Jesus Christ has conferred upon it over His real Body and over His mystical Body, which is the Church; and owing to the divine mission entrusted to priests of leading all men to eternal life.

The Catholic Priesthood is necessary to the Church, because without it the faithful would be without the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and most of the Sacraments, nor would they have anyone to instruct them in the faith, and they would be like sheep without a shepherd at the mercy of wolves; and, in brief, the Church would not exist in the way in which Jesus Christ established it.

And therefore the Catholic Priesthood, notwithstanding the war waged against it by hell, will last to the end of time, since Jesus Christ has promised that the power of hell shall never prevail against His Church.

It is therefore a very grave sin to despise the priesthood, because the contempt and wrongs offered to priests fall upon Jesus Christ Himself,

who said to His Apostles : “ *He who despises you despises Me.*”

The one end of him who embraces the ecclesiastical state should be the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

To become an ecclesiastic it is necessary before everything else to have a divine vocation. To discover whether one has such a vocation one must : 1. fervently pray to the Lord to show what His will is ; 2. take the advice of one's own Bishop or of a learned and prudent director ; 3. make a diligent examination as to whether one has the necessary capacity for study and the ministry, and for the obligations of the calling.

To become an ecclesiastic without a divine vocation would be a serious evil and would expose one to the danger of perdition. And hence parents do ill who, from temporal motives, induce their children to become ecclesiastics without a vocation, and commit a grave wrong, because thereby they take upon themselves the right which God has reserved to Himself alone of selecting His ministers, and they put their sons in danger of eternal damnation.

The following are the duties of the faithful towards those who are called to Holy Orders :

1. To allow their sons and dependents full liberty to follow the call of God ;
2. To pray to God to vouchsafe to His Church good pastors and zealous ministers, since it is for this very end that fasts are ordained at the four Ember seasons ;
3. To show singular respect towards all those who are, by means of Holy Orders, consecrated to the service of God.

IX.—Matrimony

I.—THE NATURE OF THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY

MATRIMONY is a sacrament instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ, which establishes between a man and a woman an indissoluble union, and gives them grace to love one another holily and to bring up their children as Christians.

Matrimony was instituted by God Himself in the Garden of Eden, and in the New Testament it was raised by Jesus Christ to the dignity of a sacrament.

This sacrament signifies the indissoluble union between Jesus Christ and the Holy Church, His spouse and our most loving mother.

The marriage bond is said to be indissoluble, incapable of being untied, except by the death of one of the consorts, because God has thus established it from the beginning, and Jesus Christ Our Lord has thus proclaimed it.

In Christian marriage it is impossible to separate the contract from the sacrament, because for Christians marriage is nothing else than the same natural contract raised by Jesus Christ to the rank of a sacrament. Hence, between Christians there can be no real marriage which is not a sacrament.

The sacrament of marriage produces the following effects: 1. it gives an increase of sanctifying graces; 2. it confers special grace for the faithful fulfilment of all matrimonial duties.

2.—THE MINISTERS, THE RITE, AND THE DISPOSITIONS

The ministers in this sacrament are the contracting parties themselves, who reciprocally confer and receive the sacrament.

This sacrament, in keeping the nature of a contract, is administered by the contracting parties by means of a declaration in the presence of their parish priest or his delegate, and of two witnesses, that they are united in matrimony.

The blessing given by the parish priest to the contracting parties is not necessary to make the sacrament, but it is given to sanction their union in the name of the Church, and to bring down upon them still more fully the blessing of God.

Whoever enters into a marriage contract ought to have the intention : 1. Of doing the will of God, who has called him to such a state of life. 2. Of working thereby the salvation of his own soul. 3. Of bringing up his children as Christians, if God permits him to have any.

In order to make use of the sacrament of Matrimony with profit, the contracting parties should : 1. Recommend themselves with all their hearts to God to know His will, and to obtain from Him those graces which are necessary for such a state of life. 2. Take the advice of their parents before making the promise, as is required by the obedience and respect which are their due. 3. Prepare by means of a good confession, and even a general one, if needed, of their whole life. 4. Avoid all dangerous familiarity of behaviour and speech in their mutual intercourse.

Finally, persons joined together in matrimony ought : 1. To keep unbroken fidelity to one another, and to behave themselves always as Christians in everything. 2. To love one another reciprocally and bear with one another with patience, and live in peace and concord. 3. If they have children, to think seriously how to provide for them as may be needed, giving them a

Christian education, and leaving them free to choose the state of life to which God calls them.

3.—CONDITIONS AND IMPEDIMENTS

In order to contract a *valid* Christian marriage, it is necessary to be free from every *diriment* matrimonial impediment, and freely to give one's own consent to the marriage contract before the parish priest or his delegate and two witnesses.

That the contract may be *lawful*, it is necessary to be free from *impedient* matrimonial impediments, to be instructed in the principal things of religion and to be in a state of grace, otherwise a sacrilege would be committed.

Matrimonial impediments are circumstances which make the marriage either *invalid* or *unlawful*. In the first case, they are called *diriment* impediments, in the second *impedient* impediments.

Thus, a *diriment* impediment would be, for instance, consanguinity until the fourth degree, spiritual kinship, a *solemn* vow of chastity, difference of worship between a baptized and an unbaptized person, and so on.

Impedient impediments are, *e.g.*, forbidden seasons, a *simple* vow of chastity, and the like.

The faithful are bound to make known to ecclesiastical authority such matrimonial impediments as are known to them, and, therefore, it is that the publication of banns is made by the parish priest.

The Church alone has power to set up impediments and to judge of the validity of a marriage between Christians, as the Church alone has power to *dispense* from the impediments which she has set up. The Church alone has this power,

because in Christian marriage, since the contract cannot be separated from the sacrament, even the *contract* falls under the government of the Church, to whom *alone* Jesus Christ has entrusted the privilege of making laws and decisions in things sacred.

Hence, the *bond* of Christian marriage cannot be untied by the civil power, because the latter cannot intervene in the matter of a sacrament and separate what God has joined together.

Civil marriage is nothing else than a form prescribed by the law in order to secure certain civil effects to the contracting parties and to their offspring. For a Christian it is not enough to make a civil contract only, because this is not a sacrament, and, therefore, it is not real marriage. Were the contracting parties to live together with nothing but civil marriage, they would be in a continual state of mortal sin, and their union would remain always illegitimate before God and the Church.

Nevertheless, the civil marriage should also be performed, because although this is no sacrament, it still always helps to guarantee to the contracting parties and to their children the civil effects of conjugal association ; and therefore, as a general rule, ecclesiastical authority does not allow religious marriage unless the prescribed acts of the civil law have first been conformed with.

PART V

THE PRINCIPAL VIRTUES AND OTHER THINGS THAT A CHRISTIAN OUGHT TO KNOW

I.—The Principal Virtues

I.—THE THEOLOGICAL VIRTUES

SUPERNATURAL virtue is a faculty infused by God into the soul, and giving it a propensity, facility and readiness to know and do good in order to eternal life.

The principal supernatural virtues are seven in number, *i.e.*, three theological and four cardinal virtues.

The theological virtues are: Faith, Hope and Charity.

These virtues are called theological, because God is their immediate and principal end, and they are infused by Him.

They have God for their immediate end, because by Faith we believe in God, and believe all that He has revealed; by Hope we hope to possess God; and by Charity we love God, and love ourselves and our neighbour in Him.

God in His goodness infused the theological virtues into our souls when He adorned us with His sanctifying grace, and therefore when we were baptized we were endowed with these virtues, and, along with them, with the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

If anyone has attained the use of reason, it is not enough to have received the theological virtues by means of Baptism in order to be saved ; but it is necessary to have done acts of such virtues frequently. We are bound to make acts of Faith, Hope and Charity ; 1. on the attainment of the use of reason ; 2. often in the course of our lives ; 3. when we are in danger of death.

2.—FAITH

Faith is a supernatural virtue, infused by God into our souls, whereby, relying on the authority of God Himself, we believe whatever He has revealed, and whatever He proposes for us to believe by means of the Church, to be true.

We know the truths revealed by God by means of the Church which is infallible, *i.e.*, we know them through the Pope, the successor of St. Peter, and through the Bishops, the successors of the Apostles who were taught by Jesus Christ Himself.

We are quite sure of the things which are taught us by the Holy Church, because Jesus Christ has pledged His word that the Church shall never be deceived.

Faith is lost by denying or by wilfully doubting even one article proposed for our belief. It is regained by repenting of the sin thus committed and by believing afresh all that the Holy Church believes.

3.—MYSTERIES

We cannot understand all the truths of the Faith, because some of them are mysteries.

Mysteries are truths above reason, which we ought to believe though we cannot understand them.

We should believe them because God has revealed them, and He is Truth and infinite Goodness, and cannot either be deceived or deceive.

Mysteries are beyond, but not contrary to reason ; and it is, indeed, reason that induces us to accept mysteries. Mysteries, however, cannot be contrary to reason, because it is God Himself who has given us the light of reason and revealed the mysteries, and He cannot contradict Himself.

4.—HOLY SCRIPTURE

The truths which God has revealed are contained in Holy Scripture and Tradition.

Holy Scripture is the collection of sacred writings of Prophets and Sacred Writers, Apostles and Evangelists, inspired by the Holy Ghost, and received by the Church as inspired.

Holy Scripture is divided into two parts : the Old Testament and the New.

The Old Testament contains the inspired books written before the coming of Jesus Christ ; the New Testament those written after His coming.

Holy Scripture is generally called the Holy Bible. The word Bible means the collection of sacred books, the Book *par excellence*, the Book of books, the Book inspired by God.

Holy Scripture is called the book *par excellence*, because of the excellence of the matter of which it treats, and because of its author.

In Holy Scripture there can be no error, because, as it is all inspired, the author of all its parts is God Himself. This does not hinder some of the copies and translations from containing some mistakes of copyists and translators. Nevertheless, in the editions received and ap-

proved by the Catholic Church there can be no errors in what concerns faith or morals..

The reading of the Bible is not necessary for all Christians, since they are taught by the Church, but still it is very useful and recommended to all.

We may read those vernacular translations of the Bible which are recognised as faithful by the Church, and which are provided with explanations approved by her. But only her approved translations may be read, because she is the sole legitimate guardian of the Bible.

We can ascertain the true sense of Holy Scripture only through the Church, because the Church alone cannot err in her interpretation of it.

If a Catholic were offered the Bible by a Protestant, or by one of their emissaries, he should reject it with horror, because it is forbidden by the Church; and if he has obtained it inadvertently, he should at once throw it into the fire or give it to his parish priest. Protestant Bibles are forbidden, because they are corrupted or contain errors, and because they are not approved by the Church and are without notes explanatory of difficult passages, and hence may do harm to the Faith. And for this reason the Church forbids even translations of Holy Scripture already approved by her, if they are reprinted without explanations which she has approved.

5.—TRADITION

Tradition is the unwritten word of God, orally handed down by Jesus Christ and His Apostles, and coming down to us from age to age through the Church.

Traditional teaching is found chiefly in the decrees of the Councils, in the writings of the

Fathers, in the Acts of the Holy See, and in the words and customs of the sacred Liturgy. It should be held in the same esteem as the revealed word of God contained in Holy Scripture.

6.—HOPE

Hope is a supernatural gift of God infused into our souls, whereby we desire and expect the eternal life which He has promised to His servants and the helps required to secure it.

We ought to hope for these things because God, who is most merciful, has promised them to those who serve Him from their hearts through the merits of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and since God is most faithful and all-powerful, He always keeps His promises.

The conditions necessary for obtaining paradise are the grace of God, the practice of good works, and perseverance in His holy love until death.

Hope is lost whenever Faith is lost. It is also lost by the sins of despair or of presumption. It is regained by repenting of the sin committed, and by stirring up anew confidence in the divine goodness.

7.—CHARITY

Charity is a supernatural gift infused by God into ourselves, whereby we love God in Himself above all things, and our neighbour as ourselves for the love of God.

We ought to love God, because He is the highest good, infinitely good and perfect; and further, because He commands us to do so, and also on account of the number and greatness of the benefits which we receive of Him.

Moreover, God must be loved above all things,

with all the heart and mind, and with all the soul and strength.

To love God above all things is to prefer Him to all creatures, even the most dear and the most perfect, and to be ready to lose everything rather than to offend Him or cease to love Him. To love Him with all the heart is to consecrate all our affections to Him. Loving Him with all the mind means directing all our thoughts to Him. To love Him with all the soul is to consecrate all the powers of the soul to Him. Loving Him with all the strength means taking pains to grow in His love ever more and more, and to act so that everything that we do may have God and the desire of pleasing Him as its end.

We should love our neighbour for the love of God, because He orders us to do so, and because every man is made in the image of God.

It is also our duty to love our enemies, because they, too, are our neighbours, and because Jesus Christ has expressly commanded it.

Loving one's neighbour as one's self means to wish for him and to do to him, as far as we can, the good we ought to wish for ourselves, and not to wish or do him any ill.

We love ourselves as we should do, when we seek to serve God and to place all our happiness in Him.

Charity is lost through any mortal sin. It is regained by making acts of love of God, by repenting and making confession as we ought.

8.—THE CARDINAL VIRTUES

The cardinal virtues are Prudence, Justice, Fortitude and Temperance.

These are called cardinal virtues, because they

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are the hinge and the foundation of the moral virtues.

Prudence is the virtue which directs every action to its proper end, and, therefore, it seeks the fitting means to make a work turn out well done in every way, and hence it pleases the Lord.

Justice is the virtue whereby we render to everyone his due.

Fortitude makes us courageous and fearless of all danger, even death itself, in the service of God.

Temperance is the virtue whereby we control our unruly desire for sensual pleasure, and use temporal goods with moderation.

II.—The Gifts of the Holy Ghost

THE gifts of the Holy Ghost are seven in number :

1. Wisdom. 2. Understanding. 3. Counsel.
4. Fortitude. 5. Knowledge. 6. Love. 7. Fear of God.

The gifts of the Holy Ghost help to confirm us in Faith, Hope and Charity, and to perform readily the acts of virtue which are required to obtain Christian perfection.

Wisdom is a gift whereby we lift up our minds from things earthly and perishable to the contemplation of things eternal, *i.e.*, the eternal Truth which is God, by tasting and loving Him, wherein consists all our good.

Understanding is a gift which facilitates, as far as possible to mortal man, the comprehension of the truths of the Faith and of the divine mysteries, which we cannot understand by the natural light of the intellect.

Counsel enables us, amidst the doubts and

uncertainties of human life, to ascertain what is most for the glory of God, our own salvation and that of our neighbour.

Fortitude imparts valour and courage in the faithful observance of the holy laws of God and the Church, by overcoming all the hindrances and attacks of our enemies.

Knowledge enables us to judge rightly of things created, to know how to make good use of them, and to employ them to the glory of God.

Love is a gift whereby we venerate and love God and the Saints, and keep a charitable and benevolent mind towards our neighbour for the love of God.

The fear of God makes us revere God and fear to offend His divine Majesty, and keeps us from evil by stimulating us to do what is good.

III.—The Evangelical Beatitudes

THE evangelical Beatitudes are eight in number:—

1. Blessed are the poor in spirit : for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

2. Blessed are the meek : for they shall possess the land.

3. Blessed are they that mourn : for they shall be comforted.

4. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after justice : for they shall have their fill.

5. Blessed are the merciful : for they shall obtain mercy.

6. Blessed are the clean of heart : for they shall see God.

7. Blessed are the peacemakers : for they shall be called the children of God.

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8. Blessed are they who suffer persecution for justice sake : for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus Christ puts the Beatitudes before us to make us detest the maxims of the world, and to invite us to love and practise the maxims of His Gospel.

The world calls blessed those who abound in riches and honours, who live joyously and have no chance of suffering.

The poor in spirit, according to the Gospel, are those who have their hearts detached from all riches, make good use of them if they possess them, do not seek them eagerly if they are without them, and endure the loss of them with resignation, if they are taken away.

The meek are those who treat their neighbour with gentleness, and put up with their failings with patience, and also any wrongs they may have received from them, without quarrelling, resentment or vindictiveness.

Those who mourn and yet are said to be blessed are those who suffer tribulations with resignation, who are grieved for sins committed, for the evils and scandals they see in the world, for being so far from paradise and for the danger of losing it.

Those who hunger and thirst after justice are those who ardently desire ever to grow more and more in divine grace and in the exercise of good and virtuous works.

The merciful are those who love their neighbour in and for the love of God, and have compassion on his afflictions both spiritual and temporal, and do their best to alleviate them according to their ability and position.

The clean of heart are those who have no lean-

ing towards sin and hold aloof from it, and especially keep away from all kinds of impurity.

The peaceable are those who keep peace with their neighbours and are at peace within, and take pains to make peace between those who are at variance.

Those who suffer persecution for the love of justice are those who bear with patience derision, rebukes and persecutions for the faith and laws of Jesus Christ.

The various rewards promised by Jesus Christ in the Beatitudes all signify, under various names, the eternal glory of heaven.

The Beatitudes not only secure us the eternal glory of paradise, but they are also the means of leading a happy life, so far as this is possible, in this world. For even in this life those who follow the Beatitudes enjoy an inward peace and content, which is the beginning, although incomplete, of eternal felicity.

Those who follow the maxims of the world are not happy, because they have not true inward peace of soul and run the danger of damnation.

IV.—Works of Mercy

THE following are the good works of which we shall have to give a particular account on the Day of Judgement, and they are works of mercy.

Works of mercy are those whereby we succour the corporal or spiritual needs of our neighbour.

The following are the corporal works of mercy:

1. To give food to the hungry.
2. To give to drink to the thirsty.
3. To clothe the naked.

4. To lodge strangers.
5. To visit the sick.
6. To visit those in prison.
7. To bury the dead.

The following are the spiritual works of mercy :

1. To counsel those in doubt.
2. To instruct the ignorant.
3. To warn sinners.
4. To console the afflicted.
5. To pardon offences.
6. To bear with patience persons who vex us.
7. To pray to God on behalf of the living and the dead.

V.—Sins and their chief Kinds

THERE are two kinds of sins : original sin and actual sin.

Original sin is that with which all of us are born, and which we have incurred through the disobedience of our first parent Adam.

The losses we have incurred through the sin of Adam are : being deprived of grace, the loss of paradise, ignorance, inclination towards evil, death, and all other sorts of wretchedness.

Original sin is blotted out by Holy Baptism.

In man who has reached the use of reason, actual sin is that which he commits by means of the use of his own will.

There are two kinds of actual sin : mortal and venial.

Mortal sin is a transgression of divine law, whereby we gravely fall short of our duties towards God, our neighbour and ourselves.

It is called mortal sin because it kills the soul by making it lose sanctifying grace, which is the life of the soul, as the soul is the life of the body.

The following are the injuries done to the soul by mortal sin :

1. It deprives the soul of the grace and friendship of God.
2. It makes the soul lose paradise.
3. It deprives the soul of the merits already acquired, and makes it incapable of gaining fresh ones.
4. It makes the soul the slave of the devil.
5. It makes the soul deserve hell, and also the chastisements of this life.

To constitute a mortal sin, there must be grave matter, full knowledge, and deliberate will to commit the sin.

Venial sin is a light transgression of divine law, whereby we fall short only to a slight extent in some duty towards God, our neighbour or ourselves. It is called venial because it is light in comparison with mortal sin and does not make us lose divine grace, and God easily pardons it.

Nevertheless, it would be a very great error not to take serious account of venial sin, because it always involves some offence against God and no small injury to the soul,

Venial sin indeed brings upon us the following harm :

1. It weakens and makes charity grow cold in us.
2. It disposes us to commit mortal sin.
3. It makes us deserve great temporal punishments both in this world and the next.

VI.—The chief Vices and other graver Sins

VICE is a bad habit of the soul disposing us to flee what is good and to do what is evil, and it is brought about by the constant repetition of bad acts.

There is this difference between a sin and a vice, that a sin is a passing act, while a vice is a bad habit which we have formed of falling into some kind of sin.

The vices which are called capital are seven in number : 1. Pride ; 2. Avarice ; 3. Luxury ; 4. Anger ; 5. Gluttony ; 6. Envy ; 7. Idleness.

Capital vices are overcome by the practice of the contrary virtues. Thus pride is overcome by humility ; avarice, by liberality ; impurity, by chastity ; anger, by patience ; gluttony, by abstinence ; envy, by brotherly love ; idleness, by diligence and fervour in the service of God.

These vices are called capital, because they are the origin and cause of many other vices and sins.

There are also six sins against the Holy Ghost : 1. despair as to salvation ; 2. presumption that one may be saved without merits ; 3. resisting known truth ; 4. envy of the grace of others ; 5. obstinacy in sinning ; 6. final impenitence.

These sins are said to be specially against the Holy Ghost, because they are committed out of pure malignity, which is contrary to the goodness which is attributed to the Holy Ghost.

There are further four sins which are said to cry for vengeance to God : 1. wilful murder ; 2. unnatural sins of impurity ; 3. oppression of the poor ; 4. defrauding labourers of their wages.

These sins are said to cry for vengeance in the sight of God, because the Holy Ghost has said so,

and because their iniquity is a serious and manifest thing, which provokes God to punish them with severe chastisements.

VII.—The Last Things

THE Last Things are so called in the Sacred Writings because they are the things that finally occur to man.

The Last Things are four in number: Death, Judgement, Hell and Heaven.

Death is the last thing which happens to us in this world, the judgement is the last of all judgements that we shall have to undergo, hell is the most extreme evil in store for the wicked, and heaven is the highest good reserved for the good.

It is salutary to think of the last things every day, and especially when we make our first prayer on awaking suddenly in the morning, and in the evening before going to rest, and at all times whenever we are tempted to evil, because the thought of these things is a most powerful help in the avoidance of sin.

VIII.—Daily Exercises and Devotions for all Christians

A GOOD Christian, as soon as he is awake, ought to make the sign of the holy Cross and offer His heart to God, saying these or similar words: "O God, I give Thee my heart and my soul."

While getting up and dressing he should bear in mind that God is present, and that this day

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may be the last of his life, and wash and dress with all possible modesty.

As soon as he has finished dressing, he should put himself in the presence of God, and kneel down, if possible, before some holy picture or statue, and say devoutly: "I adore Thee, O my God, and I love Thee with all my heart, I give Thee thanks for having made me a Christian and kept me through this night; I offer Thee all my acts; I pray Thee to keep me this day without sin and to deliver me from all evil. Amen." Then he should repeat the *Pater Noster*, *Ave Maria* and *Credo*, and acts of Faith, Hope and Charity, with the most lively affection of heart.

If possible, a Christian ought to be present daily at: 1. Holy Mass; 2. Make a visit, however brief, to the Most Holy Sacrament; 3. Recite the Rosary.

Before beginning any work he should offer his work to God, saying from his heart: "O Lord, I offer Thee this work: give me Thy blessing."

We ought to work for God's glory and to do His will.

Before taking anything to eat, we should stand up and make the sign of the Cross, and then say reverently: "O Lord God, give us Thy blessing, and bless the food we are about to take to sustain us in Thy service."

After meals we should make the sign of the Cross and say: "O Lord, I thank Thee for the food that Thou hast given me: make me worthy to partake of Thy heavenly table."

When attacked by temptation we should invoke with faith the Holy Name of Jesus or of Mary, or make some fervent ejaculation, such as: "Give me grace, O Lord, never to offend Thee," or else

make the sign of the Cross, taking care, however, that these outward signs may not apprise others of our temptations.

If anyone is in doubt as to whether he has sinned, he should at once make an act of contrition and take steps to go to confession as soon as possible.

Out of Church, when one hears the signal for the elevation of the host at High Mass or Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, one should make, at least in heart, an act of adoration, saying :

“ O Sacrament most holy ! O Sacrament divine !
All praise and all thanksgiving be every moment
Thine ! ”

or the like. At the ringing of the Angelus bell, the good Christian should recite the *Angelus Domini* with its three *Ave Marias*.

In the evening, before going to bed, it is fitting, as in the morning, to put one's self in the presence of God, to recite the same prayers with devotion, to make an examination of conscience, and to ask God's pardon for the sins committed during the day. And, before going to sleep, we should make the sign of the Cross, think that we may die in the night, and give our heart to God, saying, “ My Lord and my God, I give Thee all my heart; Most Holy Trinity, give me grace to live a good life and to die a good death; Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, I give you my heart and my soul.”

During the day, we may frequently pray to God with other short prayers, called *Ejaculations*. For instance: “ Lord help me ”; “ Lord, may Thy most holy will be done ”; “ My Jesus, I wish to be wholly Thine ”; “ Jesus, mercy ”; “ Sweet

Heart of Jesus, make me to love Thee always more and more." It is, indeed, a most helpful thing to say many ejaculatory prayers during the day, and they may be said in heart without opening the lips, while we are walking or working, or the like.

The Christian should also practise Christian mortification. To mortify one's self is to abandon, for the love of God, what pleases one, and to accept what is displeasing to the senses or to one's self-love.

When the Blessed Sacrament is taken to any sick person, one should endeavour, if possible, to accompany it with modesty and recollection, and if not, to make an act of adoration in whatever place it is, and then to say, "Console, O Lord, this sick person, and give him grace to conform to Thy holy will and to obtain salvation."

When the bell tolls for the agony of any dying person, one should, if possible, go to the church to pray for him, and, if not able to do this, then recommend his soul to the Lord, thinking that, before long, one may be one's self in the same state. And, on hearing the knell of the passing bell, one should endeavour to say a *De profundis*, or have a *Requiem* said for the soul of the deceased, and renew one's thought of death.

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